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UNITED STATES NAVY

WAR DIARY OF ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

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1 JUNE - 31 JULY, 1943
PG NUMBERS 31533-31536

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WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

1 JUNE - 31 JULY, 1943

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WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

1 - 15 JUNE, 1943

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1 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0330 and 0400 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk detected considerable traffic between Ghelenjik and the beachhead: at 0330 11 vessels and 1 M.T.B. and at 0400 10 vessels and M.T.B.s, all course southeast; at 0831 1 tug and 2 patrol vessels putting out from Ghelenjik.

In moderate visibility, daylight air reconnaissance examined the coastal area from Novorossisk to Ochemchiri as far as 50 km. from the shore. Owing to the weather and thick clouds, no reconnaissance was possible south of Ochemchiri. Individual sightings: at 0822 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0900 1 small vessel, course southeast, off Sochi; at 1530 1 patrol boat 10 miles west of Sukhum; at 1755 1 minesweeper, 1 towed convoy totaling 800 tons, and 4 patrol vessels, course northwest, 25 miles northwest of Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:
Ghelenjik at 0825: 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,500 tons, and 50 boats.
Tuapse at 0840: 1 minesweeper, 1 freighter of 700 tons, 10 coastal vessels totaling 2,500 tons, and 15 boats.
Sukhum at 0806: 1 freighter of 800 tons and 3 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons.
Owing to the weather, the other ports were not examined.

In the Sea of Azov 1 coastal vessel, course north, was sighted west of Primorsko Akhtari at 0710.

At 0000 night air reconnaissance located several small vessels 10 miles west of Novorossisk and at 0115 1 submarine 25 miles west of Tuapse. No further traffic was detected between Ghelenjik and Adler.

In the morning, Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located 1 probable destroyer off the central part of the east coast. Submarines detected: 4 - 6: 1 west of Eupatoria, 1 off the south coast of the Crimea, 1 in the southwestern Black Sea and the rest in the area off the east coast.

No important engagements on the Army front at the Kuban bridgehead.

Own Situation:

0400 Temriuk reported no incidents in the patrol line off the Kuban estuary. Lively air activity was again observed at sea.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: W - NW winds, force 3 - 4, increasing in the afternoon, cloudy, isolated showers, visibility 8 - 12 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: W - NW winds, force 4 - 5, increasing to force 6 in the afternoon, abating to force 4 in the evening, cloudy to overcast, showers, visibility about 10 miles.

Execution of operation "Nautilus" on the night of 1/2 June is very doubtful in this weather. However, as the new moon period begins on 2 June and no great changes in the weather can be foreseen for the coming dark nights, Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to carry out the operation during the night of 1/2 June. He was authorized to break off operations if the boats were endangered by the weather as a result of the mines on board.

1630 E-boats S 47, S 52, S 28 and S 26 put out from Ivan Baba for the operation as ordered. At the same time motor minesweepers R 166 and R 163 put out from Kerch. The E-boats proceeded via route Brown to the east; at 1800 they met the motor minesweepers off Cape Takil as ordered and commenced joint passage.

Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol reported that examination of steamer "Charkov" by divers had shown that, apart from slight fissures in one plate, the ship had no leaks. Caulking by means of a collision mat is thought to be possible, so she will not have to put in to dock.

1st Air Corps reported that a Staffel of 12 Rumanian fighters had arrived at Eupatoria and was available for escort tasks in the western Black Sea. Request to be submitted by Admiral, Black Sea via Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea.

1500 The "Celeno" convoy, which was escorted by the Rumanian destroyer "Marasesti", 2 motor minesweepers and "Ship 19", was attacked 15 miles southwest of Eupatoria. The vessels were proceeding from Sevastopol to Constantza. The tracks of 4 torpedoes were observed, but no hits were scored. "Ship 19" pursued the submarine and attacked her several times with depth

charges. At 1815, the submarine showed her bows and conning tower for a short time and she was shelled with 8.8 cm. guns. Hits of 2 cm. shells were observed on the conning tower. Further anti-submarine operations were unsuccessful as the search gear aboard "Ship 19" broke down. Slight oil traces were observed, but there was no actual proof that the submarine had been destroyed.

2100 Naval Harbor Master, Temriuk reported that the boats could not put out for coastal defense duties owing to the weather. When the wind later abated, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2, naval ferry barge F 401 and 4 combined operations boats put out at 2300.

Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 was transferred to Kerch today. According to a report from Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, the pontoons are still leaking even at slow speed. Proposals for improvement are now being examined in Kerch dockyard.

Throughout the day, no enemy air raids were carried out. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the usual artillery bombardment of the site at the east harbor and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity in Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192, the group with skid gear and the group with towed loop gear swept the area east of the line of buoys several times on the coastal route between Pavlovski and Cape Takil. No mines swept.

Minesweeping planes made a check sweep for ground mines on the new route between point Brown 17 and Zhelezni Rog.

Planes were observed circling low in the Beresanski channel area on the route to Kherson; mines were suspected. Today, 2 minesweeping planes were transferred to Kherson to search for ground mines in Beresanski channel. An officer with knowledge of the area will be appointed by Commander, Convoys and Escorts to act as guide for the pilots.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 101 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 27 is on return passage to Kerch with 1 tug, 1 lighter and 4 naval ferry barges, accompanied by naval gunnery lighter No. 3 which is on transfer to Kerch.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 22 is on passage to Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

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2 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0835 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 3 coastal vessels putting in to Ghelenjik, at 1337 1 M.T.B. and at 1510 1 motor minesweeper and 1 patrol vessel in the area off Ghelenjik. At 1920 several vessels made off from Cape Doob to the south.

Daylight air reconnaissance detected moderate traffic close to the Caucasus coast: at 0828 1 M.T.B., course southeast, 23 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0905 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, 7 miles west of Adler; at 0840 1 motor minesweeper, stopped, 17 miles southwest of Ochemchiri; at 0740 another motor minesweeper 42 miles west of Poti; at 1730 1 motor minesweeper, course south, high speed, 25 miles west of Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:
Ghelenjik at 0905: 10 coastal vessels totaling 3,000 tons, and 50 boats.
Tuapse at 0845: 1 coastal vessel, 1 minesweeper and 15 boats.
No further ports were reconnoitered owing to the weather.

In the Sea of Azov air reconnaissance detected 1 small coastal vessel, course east, 13 miles west of Primorsko Akhtari at 0915.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located lively submarine traffic. Positions could not be identified accurately. No movements of large surface vessels were detected.

No important engagements on the Army front.

Own Situation:

0500 Temriuk reported no incidents during coastal defense duties off the Kuban estuary. No air activity observed.

Last night, despite a high swell, E-boats S 47, S 52, S 28 and S 26 and motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 laid mines as scheduled northwest of Ghelenjik (operation "Nautilus"). The enemy did not observe the minelaying. At 0000 the motor minesweepers were dismissed according to plan. They put in to Anapa at 0315 and

proceeded to Kerch at 1200 with Anapa convoy No. 102. The E-boats then carried out a decoy bombardment of the landing place at Myshako as ordered, each firing 2 torpedoes. The torpedoes exploded ashore but results were not observed as it was very dark. After return passage the boats put in to Ivan Baba at 0630.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light variable winds, sea wind on the coasts in the afternoon, fair to cloudy, isolated thunderstorms, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night 8° - 10° C.

U 24 was ordered to put out from Constantza on 5 June for the operational area between Tuapse and Cape Idokopas. Her task was to attempt surprise attacks on towed convoys and coastal vessels proceeding close to the coast, with the aim of forcing the enemy to operate at night and restricting enemy escort vessels. When this task was completed, U 24 was to be given a new attack area.

Locations and bearings on enemy submarines during the last few weeks show clearly that they surface regularly between 1700 and 2300 some 15 miles from the Crimean coast. It is assumed that these submarines, which by day operated submerged against our supply traffic close to the Crimean coast, recharged their batteries further out to sea in the evening. I have therefore requested 1st Air Corps to obtain confirmation by air reconnaissance and to check that particular area carefully.

While the fixed route south of Kerch Strait was being changed because of the extension of the minefield, I ordered route Brown to be extended as far as Anapa on courses hitherto used by Anapa convoys. Owing to the enemy mine situation, the proposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to arrange for a new direct route from Cape Takil to Anapa to be used at night had to be rejected.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported that delays in the running of convoys from the Aegean Sea to the Black Sea through Turkish territorial waters resulted in undesirable stoppage of our own convoy vessels off the Bosporus. These periods of waiting were extremely dangerous because of the operations of enemy submarines and planes. To avoid this, Commander, Convoys and Escorts proposed that, in future, convoys coming from the west should call

at Istanbul. From there they should put out at fixed hours.

In principle, I agree with the opinion of Commander, Convoys and Escorts that convoy vessels cannot wait more than 2 hours off the Bosporus and that they cannot be picked up there in darkness. On the other hand, any period in Turkish ports involves the danger of sabotage, political intrigue and betrayal of the port of destination and cargo. Passage of the convoys through Turkish territorial waters must not, therefore, be interrupted. I requested Group Command to work out suitable measures, if necessary via Naval Attache, so that rapid and safe communication of messages on the current number of convoys in Turkish waters would in future ensure rendezvous of the convoys on this side of the Bosporus.

Today, a non-contact mine was swept by skid gear outside the channel when the "Hainburg", "Indus" and "Potemkin" convoy put out from Sevastopol. The mine exploded and damaged the skid gear. Naval Port Commander, Sevastopol was ordered to arrange for salvage and to employ towed loop gear at once to search the area in question. At 1500 enemy planes repeatedly attacked the convoy in the area off Eupatoria as far as Cape Tarkhankutzki. A bomb which landed close to "Hainburg" caused numerous leaks. 200 splinters penetrated her and she had to be beached at Karacha. Salvage has been arranged for 3 June and the necessary anti-aircraft protection assured by the provision of 1 platoon of quadruple anti-aircraft guns on the beach. The other convoy vessels continued passage to Odessa. Casualties aboard motor vessel "Hainburg" were 3 men killed, 4 seriously wounded and 4 slightly wounded. On board "Ship 19", 2 men were seriously wounded.

Submarine chaser "Xanten" put out from Galatz today for further dockyard overhaul in Constantza.

1635 At 1635 off Wessarwisnessenki, 5 bombers and 3 fighters attacked the convoy which was proceeding from Mariupol to Taganrog with tugs and lighters. In 4 attacks, the planes dropped 10 high-explosive bombs and numerous fragmentation bombs and also machine-gunned the convoy. Tug "Habicht" and 1 lighter were slightly damaged and 2 naval personnel and 1 Ukrainian volunteer were slightly wounded. During the night, the enemy continued to search for the convoy with flares, but without success.

1930 Naval gunnery lighter No. 1, naval ferry barge F 401 and 10 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of the enemy attacks on the "Hainburg" convoy and the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy, no air raids took place today.

Minesweeping Activity:

When minesweeping planes completed sweeping for ground mines in the Danube estuary, the Danube was reopened to German ships. The FZ-Group, Sevastopol swept the area between the approach point at Sevastopol and the minefield seven times as ordered. No mines swept.

Minesweeping in Kerch Strait was continued as scheduled. Groups with towed loop gear and skid gear and mine-exploding vessel No. 192 again swept the coastal route from Kerch to Cape Takil east of the line of buoys to widen the channel. No mines swept. The group of motor minesweepers (RA) laid buoys to mark the new route north of Kerch Strait. Minesweeping planes carried out check sweeps on this channel 16 times. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 102 ran as scheduled. On return passage, the 5 naval ferry barges had additional escort from motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 which were returning from minelaying.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1800 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 28 put out from Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 22 is on return passage to Genichesk as scheduled with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident.

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3 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk again reported from the observation post at Myshako that many vessels had been detected throughout the day: in the forenoon several tugs, lighters and patrol vessels; at 1812 3 coastal vessels proceeding from Ghelenjik to the south; at 1850 15 vessels including 2 coastal vessels, also several motor minesweepers and M.T.B.s proceeding from Ghelenjik to the south into the assembly area.

As this assembly area which Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk had already mentioned several times had never been detected by air reconnaissance despite all their efforts and as it was most unlikely that the enemy would assemble their convoys 10 miles south of Ghelenjik for passage to the beachhead on reverse course, I instructed Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk to check his reports accurately. It is not out of the question that the place mentioned by Naval Port Commander is used by the enemy for landing exercises.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum. The ports were photographed in good visibility. At 0845 2 M.T.B.s, course northwest, were observed 5 miles south of Ghelenjik; at 0735 2 coastal vessels, course west, 18 miles west of Sukhum; at 0750 1 coastal vessel and 2 escort vessels, course northwest, off Gudauty; at 0747 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons and 1 patrol vessel, course southeast, and 2 M.T.B.s, course north, off Ochemchiri.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0845: 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,400 tons, and some 40 boats.
Tuapse at 0815: 2 minesweepers, 3 M.T.B.s, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,200 tons, 1 floating crane and 10 boats.
Sochi at 0807: 8 motor minesweepers, some beached, and 15 boats.
Sukhum at 0745: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 2 freighters, each 1,000 tons, 1 minesweeper, 2 motor minesweepers, 1 small armed vessel and 15 boats.
Ochemchiri at 0735: the 2 submarine tenders, 6 submarines, 3 motor minesweepers and 10 small

boats.
Batum roads at 0715: 4 tankers, each 7,000 tons, and 1 freighter of 1,000 tons.
Poti roads at 0735: 1 destroyer and 2 M.T.B.s presumably in waiting positions for a north-south convoy.
Poti harbor (oblique view, therefore incomplete): 1 battleship and 1 heavy cruiser.

In the Ghelenjik area, night reconnaissance detected 2 small vessels at 2339 and 1 coastal vessel with escort 7 miles south of Ghelenjik at 2342. At 2352 1 small ship and 4 M.T.B.s, course northwest, were observed in the Tuapse area, while at 0035 2 motor minesweepers were detected 30 miles northwest of Tuapse.

In the morning, Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located 1 destroyer off the central part of the east coast and 4 submarines in unidentified positions. Lively activity of small vessels off the east coast.

No important engagements on the Army front.

Own Situation:

0110 Anapa reported that Russian boats had shelled the coast 4 km. west of Anapa for a short time with guns of small caliber (2 cm. or 3.7 cm.).

At 0200 the coast was again shelled with guns of medium caliber which, from their flashes, lay close together and were fired simultaneously, presumably volley-firing guns.

0430 The boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. No incidents, but lively air activity at sea.

0530 The attempt to tow off motor vessel "Hainburg" was successful at Chanbaba; the ship was temporarily caulked and proceeded to Ak Mechet under her own steam. At 0925 while she was entering Ak Mechet, she was attacked by 5 planes which dropped 15 bombs. No damage. Aboard naval ferry barge F 301, one of her escorts, 2 men were slightly wounded.

0700 I proceeded from Simferopol to Kerch and Temriuk to discuss the proposed bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 with Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla and 49th (Mountain) Army Corps. The principal targets were to be the landing stages, the harbor area and boats in the roads and on the beach.

I am fully aware that this operation will not deceive the enemy for long as a planned landing operation and I have informed the Army accordingly. The main purpose of this operation is to destroy as many enemy boats as possible in a surprise attack and to avert or stop enemy offensive plans.

Detailed directions were issued for the approach passage on deceptive courses, fire control and distribution of fire. I ordered that a gunnery officer should be embarked in each naval gunnery lighter to direct the boat's fire. Fighter escort was requested from 1st Air Corps for outward and return passage during daylight hours. Photographs of the operational area will be taken by 1st Air Corps on the day before the operation.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light wind veering E - N, temporarily freshening sea wind in the afternoon, fair, isolated thunderstorms, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night about 10° C.

As this weather and the new moon are eminently suitable for E-boat operations, I intend to repeat the operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla against Sochi which was carried out on 18/19 May.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was therefore ordered to fire a short, sudden burst of fire at the vessels in the roads and then to operate in the patrol line along the coast against enemy supply traffic. Return passage at maximum cruising speed via Anapa and route Brown within range of our own fighter escort. This should avoid the heavy enemy air raids to be expected in the open sea outside the radius of action of our fighters.

If the weather unexpectedly deteriorates and does not allow the boats to operate at maximum speed, the flotilla should operate against enemy supplies between Tuapse and Cape Idokopas.

In view of the increasing air raids on Anapa convoys and our resultant losses, I warned Army Group A that it might be necessary to discontinue Anapa traffic if, owing to the claims for fighter forces for other sectors of the front, the necessary air escort could not be provided. Army Group should be prepared to arrange loading and unloading points on both sides of Kerch Strait and to negotiate for railroad transportation when all supply traffic is transferred to Kerch Strait.

Today U 23 was commissioned for 30th U-Boat Flotilla in Constantza. Her commander is Lieutenant Wahlen.

The concentration of nearly all the large enemy vessels in Batum roads, particularly the large tankers, makes it advisable to employ our U-boats off the south Caucasus coast as soon as possible. Moreover, during the last operations of U 9 and U 19 off the central and northern parts of the east coast, hardly any valuable targets were met. I therefore propose to employ one of the next operational boats from Constantza off Poti or Batum to reconnoiter the situation off these ports, especially the enemy shipping routes, and also to attack traffic. From the standpoint of the dates of readiness and avoidance of the new moon period, this operation cannot take place until about 22 June. I therefore plan to transfer U 18 which is now operating in the Sukhum-Gagri area to the area off the south coast for several days at the end of her present operation (approximately 12 to 15 June).

1930 The coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk as scheduled.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the attack already mentioned on the "Hainburg" convoy, numerous raids were carried out on ports in the command area: there were surprise night attacks on Berdyansk, Anapa and Novorossisk, while Yalta and Theodosia were attacked by day.

Berdyansk: 3 bombs landed in the harbor area and on the mole, 1 boat of the harbor defense flotilla was damaged. Casualties: 1 man killed and one of the crew seriously wounded.

46 bombs were dropped on Anapa, causing slight damage.

Novorossisk: A few bombs were dropped on the town and the southern sector; usual artillery and mortar fire. One man belonging to Naval Port Command 16 was wounded.

Yalta: After repeated penetrations, 6 planes attacked at 1100, dropping 30 - 35 bombs. Quarters and 1 gun belonging to the Army coastal batteries were destroyed and several guns and emplacements were damaged. Casualties: 2 soldiers wounded, 1 civilian hurt.

Theodosia: At 1743 3 planes attacked from an altitude of 5,500 meters. Eleven bombs landed

on the mole and in the harbor basin. No damage or casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: On 2 June, the FZ-group continued minesweeping. No mines swept.

In the northern entrance to Kerch Strait, mine-exploding vessel No. 192, 2 motor minesweepers (FR) with oropesa gear, and minesweeping planes swept the new route as far as point Brown 15. Minesweeping planes swept 1 mine and 1 mine was destroyed by gunfire from mine-exploding vessel No. 192.

The FZ-group with towed loop gear (K) and noise box (turbines) swept the southern entrance to Kerch Strait to widen the channel. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled in favorable weather.

b. Anapa convoys:

Anapa convoy No. 103 ran as scheduled with 4 naval ferry barges. They did not encounter the enemy.

Convoy No. 104 put out from Kerch at 1830 with 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1845 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 28 put in to Kerch on return passage with 1 tug, 1 lighter and 3 naval ferry barges.

At 1330 Genichesk- Temriuk convoy No. 23 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. For the first time, Crimea convoys from Yalta to Theodosia and from Theodosia to Kerch proceeded by night to avoid air raids. No special incidents apart from the attack on the "Hainburg" convoy.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on Myshako mountain again reported numerous vessels: at 0315 14 coastal vessels and 3 patrol vessels proceeding from the beachhead to Ghelenjik; at 1400 3 M.T.B.s and 6 coastal vessels off Ghelenjik; at 0515 5 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik to the southwest; at 1830 1 motor minesweeper, 6 M.T.B.s, 2 lighters each 400 tons, 3 minesweepers each towing 2 lighters, all putting in to Ghelenjik; 5 tugs with 11 lighters, 2 patrol vessels, 2 coastal vessels and 3 minesweepers putting out from Ghelenjik towards the beachhead.

In the morning, air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast and ports in good visibility: at 0530 1 submarine (presumably German) 16 miles west of Tuapse; at 0635 1 destroyer, course southeast, high speed, 11 miles south of Sukhum; at 0718 1 towed convoy and 2 escort vessels 12 miles west of Poti; at 0650 1 patrol boat, stopped, 20 miles northwest of Batum.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0628: 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 13 M.T.B.s and 50 boats.
Tuapse at 0810: 9 coastal vessels totaling 3,000 tons, 3 motor minesweepers, 8 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel and 15 boats.
Sochi at 0715: 1 minesweeper, 1 freighter of 800 tons and several boats.
Sukhum at 0725: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and several boats.

No enemy shipping traffic or boat traffic was detected in the Sea of Azov.

At 0817 1 submarine was detected in the western Black Sea 67 miles southwest of Sevastopol.

At 0035 night reconnaissance off the Crimean and Caucasus coasts as far as Tuapse located 1 small ship 25 miles west of Tuapse and at 0100 2 probably larger ships 15 miles south of Ghelenjik.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia reported 1 destroyer, course southeast, off the central part of the east coast in the afternoon. During the night, another destroyer was intercepted in the southeastern Black Sea. Four submarines were located in unidentified

positions and there was also lively activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

0400 The coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. No incidents apart from lively air activity over the sea.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: variable winds, force 2 - 3, later veering N - NE in the eastern Black Sea, sea wind on the coasts, fair, isolated showers, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night 12° - 15° C.

The 2 observation posts of the meteorological office, one on Sapun hill near Myshako and the other near Battery Memel (due northwest of Novorossisk Bay), are now manned. I attach great value to these posts in view of the changeable weather conditions in the Novorossisk-Ghelenjik area. Direct radio communication will ensure transmission of the observations.

1130 E-boats S 47, S 52, S 28 and S 26 put in to Ivan Baba from the operation against Sochi. No enemy ships or patrol vessels were observed near Sochi within a range of 0.7 to 1 mile from the coast. Visibility was often impaired by thunderstorms. At 0120 S 52's starboard engine broke down and the boats commenced return passage at a certain distance from the coast at reduced speed. From 0730 the boats were repeatedly bombed: at 0730 by 3 planes which dropped 12 bombs, at 0750 by 5 planes which dropped 20 - 24 bombs and machine-gunned them and at 0830 by 2 planes which dropped 10 - 12 bombs and also machine-gunned them. Casualties: aboard S 26 1 man was seriously wounded, 3 men were slightly wounded and 1 engine was temporarily out of order. At 1000 S 26 was released to proceed to Ivan Baba. At 1050 the boats were attacked again: 3 planes machine-gunned them and dropped 12 bombs.

Although contrary to the terms of the operational order, the decision of the flotilla commander to return by the open sea was right. When S 52's starboard engine broke down, the formation was only able to proceed at a speed of 20 knots and therefore could not arrive at Anapa before day-break. On the coastal route, the formation would have been very open to attack by enemy planes taking off from the airfields between Tuapse and Ghelenjik. On the other hand, the delay in leaving the attack area cannot be

approved. The boats had orders to commence return passage at 2300 and they did not start until 2400.

The first report from the E-boats on the sighting of an enemy air shadower was transmitted by short signal. It was sent too late and was not immediately received by the radio station at Simferopol as the frequencies were then being altered. For that reason, one heavy fighter escort was not detailed until 0900. At first, fighter escort could not be provided owing to the boats' distance from the base, but Me 109s were in position to protect the formation from 1000.

One plane of Reconnaissance Commander, Black Sea, West attacked a submarine 65 miles southwest of Sevastopol without visible success.

The report from an Army observation post on the appearance of unidentified vessels at night southeast of Zhelezni Rog 4 miles from the coast suggested enemy minelaying operations. The group of motor minesweepers (RA) was therefore ordered to check the route as far as Anapa with oropesa gear and to escort Anapa convoy No. 104 with oropesa gear on return passage. While on return passage, the formation was attacked by 5 enemy ground attack planes 5 miles west of Maria Magdalena Bank at 1500. In a low-level attack, some 40 small bombs were dropped and the boats were machine-gunned. No damage. Casualties: 1 man seriously wounded on board RA 56. The boats put up barrage fire with their 7.5 cm. guns and 2 cm. anti-aircraft guns; 1 plane was shot down by the 2 cm. guns and another probably shot down by the 7.5 cm. guns.

Group Command agreed to commission the 2 captured Russian M.T.B.s which were lying in Nikolaiev and the 2 submarine chasers which were salvaged in Theodosia. After thorough investigation of their performances, I do not believe that the 2 M.T.B.s can be useful in the Black Sea. The boats are made of hard aluminum and can therefore at best operate only for a short time in salt water; moreover, we have no torpedoes suitable for them. They are not very seaworthy, their radius of action is extremely low, their armament is inadequate and they have gasoline engines. I plan to place the boats at the disposal of the River Police for employment on the Bug or the Dnieper. On the other hand, the 2 submarine chasers can easily be assimilated in 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla after dockyard repairs in Constantza.

Enemy Air Activity:

In addition to the attack on Anapa convoy No. 104, further air raids were carried out on ports: at 2010 3 bombs were dropped on Berdyansk, causing no damage; 1 plane flew over Mariupol and dropped 2 bombs, no damage; planes flew over Yalta, Alushta, Sudak, Balaklava and Sevastopol at night and in the forenoon, presumably only to drop leaflets; some 20 bombs were dropped on the southern part of Novorossisk and on the southern sector and there was also the usual artillery fire.

Between 2300 and 0400, Anapa was again shelled from the sea. Air Force D/F Station located several vessels at a range of 15 to 20 km., obviously small vessels as on the night of 2/3 June.

Minesweeping Activity:

One mine was swept by minesweeping planes in Beresanski channel (Kherson) and another in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

Groups with towed loop gear and skid gear, mine-exploding vessel No. 192 and minesweeping planes swept Kerch Strait, the route to Anapa and the area off Genichesk as scheduled.

Ferry Traffic:

The ropeway from Kerch-Yenikale to Kossa Chushka has been completed and the first trials carried out. Within the next few days, it should be in full operation. There are still no railroad connections on either side.

The planned construction of harbor facilities at the fish-salting factory south of the eastern tip of Kossa Tuszla has been started. I directed the Construction Directorate to take suitable measures to ensure that construction would be completed by the end of autumn, so that the harbor could be used during the next ice-bound period for supply traffic from Kamish Burun to the fish-salting factory. Anti-torpedo nets are to be laid to protect the jetties from torpedo attacks. At the same time, the Construction Directorate was to examine the extent of Kamish Burun's harbor facilities.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 104 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges. For air raid, see above.

At 1900 Anapa convoy No. 105 put out from Kerch.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1820 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 29 put out from Kerch for Temriuk with 1 tug, 1 lighter and 4 naval ferry barges.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 23 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

5 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0325 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 14 vessels on passage from the beachhead to Ghelenjik, at 0340 5 M.T.B.s proceeding from the west to Ghelenjik and at 0830 3 small vessels off Cape Doob. Four tugs, 8 lighters, 6 M.T.B.s and 2 motor minesweepers were reported in the assembly area south of Ghelenjik in the evening.

Daylight reconnaissance flown by 1st Air Corps in the southeastern Black Sea detected no enemy traffic. In changing visibility, the Caucasus coast was examined as far as Batum. Owing to the presence of fighters and bad visibility, the ports could only be partially reconnoitered. No important observations were made. Only slight coastal vessel and patrol vessel traffic was detected along the Caucasus coast.

In the Sea of Azov, air reconnaissance detected 3 vessels lying stopped northeast of Temriuk and 6 west of Primorsko Akhtari. The Air Force attacked an enemy submarine off the southern entrance to Kerch Strait. Four bombs were dropped without visible success.

Night reconnaissance was not flown.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia detected no movements of large naval vessels. The station located 3 submarines, one of them at 2230 in the Yalta-Sudak area. Normal activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

0445 The coastal defense boats (naval gunnery lighter No. 1, naval ferry barge F 401, 2 harbor defense boats, 2 boats of Coastal Defense Flotilla, Sea of Azov and 5 combined operations boats) put in to Temriuk and reported 3 suspicious vessels at 0010 in addition to very lively air activity. The vessels later shelled our boats and the Kuban estuary with what seemed to be 4.5 cm. guns. Two boats of Coastal Defense Flotilla answered the fire with machine-guns. The coast was immediately alerted. Upon receipt of the radio signal, naval gunnery lighter No. 1 and naval ferry barge F 401 immediately approached from the patrol line further north. However, the distance involved was too great for them to engage the enemy.

With better distribution of the gun-carrying vessels in the patrol line, countermeasures could have been more effective and the enemy might have been destroyed. I seized this opportunity to send fixed rules for the patrol line formation to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: wind mainly E, force 4 - 5, increasing in the afternoon, fair to cloudy, visibility 8 - 10 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: NE - E winds, force 3 - 4, increasing to force 5 throughout the day, fair, visibility 10 miles, temperature at night 10° - 14° C.

1245 The boat D 11, which was escorting the "Hainburg" convoy from Ak Mechet to Odessa, reported an attack by enemy planes 32 miles south of Tendra. No damage or casualties. No planes were shot down.

As an enemy reconnaissance plane had been detected over Ak Mechet this morning at 0738 transmitting a report of ships in port, I had already applied to 1st Air Corps for fighter escort for both the "Hainburg" convoy and the "Orion" and "Lühe" convoy which was on passage from Ak Mechet to Sevastopol. 1st Air Corps had detailed 1 BV 138 for each convoy and also 1 Arado for close escort, while the Rumanian fighters near Eupatoria were at immediate notice. After the attack on the "Hainburg" convoy, the fighters took off to protect the "Orion" and "Lühe" convoy. Unfortunately no fighter escort could be provided for "Hainburg" because she was so far from the fighter base.

Repeated shelling of the coast near Anapa by small enemy vessels induced me to employ E-boats against the enemy vessels during the coming night. I did not consider it advisable to reinforce 1st E-Boat Flotilla by the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, because the E-boats would then lose their advantage of superior speed. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was therefore directed to dispose 3 boats in patrol line some 5 miles from the coast between Anapa and Maria Magdalena Bank during the night of 5/6 June. Outward and return passage via the coastal route. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus and Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q. will ensure that all information is given to coastal authorities and Anapa convoys.

In view of my past experiences with naval gunnery lighters, I instructed Dockyard Control Staff to investigate the possibility of increasing their seaworthiness and fighting capacity. In their present condition, naval gunnery lighters can only be employed in good weather and light swell up to force 2. Improvement is therefore necessary, particularly in the Black Sea area with its quick and unforeseen changes in weather conditions. Possible improvements in the crews' quarters are to be examined at the same time.

U 18 reported the breakdown of her attack periscope as a result of leakage. With the strong enemy patrol in the operational area the boat was therefore no longer fully operational, although she still had 4 torpedoes aboard. She was ordered to return to Constantza immediately for repairs.

This breakdown induced me to investigate once more the possibility of carrying out small repairs to U-boats in Sevastopol. The difficulty of getting spare parts and material must be overcome in view of the important reduction in the long routes and the time saved.

1700 Sevastopol reported the result of the examination of steamer "Charkov"'s bottom: 1 bottom plate was distorted and had slight fissures which were caulked with wood wedges and concrete. The ship will be operational again until her routine docking planned for autumn.

1930 Coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk for the patrol line.

1930 Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for operations.

The first 3 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were reported ready for short operations from the evening of 5 June. In view of the more frequent appearance of enemy submarines very close to the Crimean coast and off the southern entrance to Kerch Strait, I now planned to employ 11th E-Boat Flotilla mainly on anti-submarine operations and to give the crews a chance to become acquainted with their boats. The commanders would also be able to plan their cooperation before being employed on more extensive operations.

Commander, 11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 3 boats for anti-submarine operations between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil during the coming night. They were to take up position at a distance of 5 - 10 miles from the coast. The boats were to put out at nightfall and put in again at daybreak on 6 June.

2000 Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put out from Theodosia for anti-submarine operations. 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas were informed of both operations.

1400 U 24 put out from Constantza via the northern route for operations in the area between Tuapse and Cape Idokopas.

1545 Eight planes attacked Anapa convoy No. 105 east of Zhelezni Rog on its return passage. The convoy comprised 5 naval ferry barges, motor minesweeper R 30, "Grafenau" and mine-exploding vessel No. 192. Naval ferry barge F 332 was hit on the forward anti-aircraft gun position; 3 men were killed, 2 men seriously wounded and 1 man slightly wounded. As far as could be seen, no planes were shot down by our guns.

Ten more ground attack planes attacked mine-exploding vessel No. 192. No damage, no planes shot down.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 and the 5 naval ferry barges later attacked 1 enemy submarine with depth charges and guns six miles southeast of Cape Takil. After the attack, a large oil patch of 75 square meters was observed. Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 reported the probable destruction of the submarine. Investigation has been arranged.

1550 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4 which put out from Sevastopol for Yalta with the "Woywoda" and "Dresden" convoy had to put in again as the sea was too rough.

1700 "Ship 19" put out from Sevastopol for Constantza to have her radar sets repaired.

1700 Kerch reported that the anti-torpedo net barrage off Kamish Burun was now complete.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the attack on Anapa convoy No. 105, numerous ports and loading places were again raided: 1 plane machine-gunned Mariupol; at 0710 2 bombers unsuccessfully dropped 3 bombs on the towed convoy between Mariupol and Taganrog off Krivaya Kossa, the ship's guns had no visible success; during the night, the harbor area of Temriuk was continuously attacked, 81 bombs were dropped and lighter "Sinaia" received a direct hit and sank.

The many air raids in the Sea of Azov and the recent attacks on ports on the north coast showed

that the enemy recognized the importance of our supply routes in the Sea of Azov and was now beginning systematic attacks. Future raids may be expected on the Temriuk convoys also, although up to now they have not been attacked.

From 2000 to 0100, planes penetrated to Anapa 4 times; 6 bombs were dropped, no damage.

Novorossisk reported slight artillery and mortar fire, but no air raids.

Ivan Baba was attacked twice during the morning: at 0635 by 2 planes and at 0710 by 5 planes. A total of 26 bombs was dropped, one of them on Building No. 2 of the E-boat base. 18 quarters were destroyed, 4 men killed, 1 man seriously wounded and 1 man slightly wounded. The attack was made from a high altitude and no planes were shot down.

Minesweeping Activity:

On 4 June, minesweeping planes swept 3 ground mines in the fairway leading to Kherson. Minesweeping is being continued.

No mines were swept in Kerch Strait or in the Sea of Azov. The route from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait to Temriuk was again marked with buoys.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 105 ran with 5 naval ferry barges. On return passage, the convoy was also escorted by motor minesweeper R 30, "Grafenau" and mine-exploding vessel No. 192. For air raid off Zhelezni Rog, see above.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 29 is on return passage to Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 24 put out from Genichesk at 1100 with 7 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on Myshako mountain reported the following movements of vessels:

At 0745 3 vessels (probably gunboats) proceeding from the southwest to Ghelenjik; at 0755 3 small vessels proceeding from east to west; at both 1115 and 1130 1 motorboat made off from landing point 3; at 1400 1 gunboat proceeding from landing point 3 to the east; at 1530 3 small vessels put out from Ghelenjik; at 1930 9 vessels put out from Ghelenjik towards the assembly area.

Daylight air reconnaissance detected the following shipping movements: at 1100 1 motor minesweeper, 1 guardboat, 5 coastal vessels, course northwest, 15 miles southwest of Tuapse; at 1145 1 patrol boat, course southeast, 17 miles west of Tuapse; at 1200 1 motor minesweeper and 1 small armed vessel, course northwest, 15 miles southwest of Tuapse; at 1345 1 small vessel, lying stopped, 43 miles northwest of Batum.

At 0500 fighters of 1st Air Corps sank 2 enemy M.T.B.s south of Cape Utrich. At 1930 south-east of Anapa, 1 submarine chaser was shelled and set on fire. She sank at 1112 after her ammunition exploded. Another submarine chaser in the same area was damaged by machine-gunfire and was later beached by the enemy between Kabardinka and Ghelenjik.

Results of port reconnaissance are not yet available as the reconnaissance plane (Ju 88) is overdue.

Reconnaissance in the Sea of Azov and Taganrog Bay revealed nothing of importance. Only small fishing boats were sighted.

Night reconnaissance was not flown.

In the afternoon, Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located 1 probable destroyer off the central part of the east coast. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 4 in the central to western Black Sea, 1 off Cape Sinope (Turkish coast) and 3 in unidentified positions.

On the Army front, an enemy reconnaissance sortie on Myshako mountain was repulsed. Otherwise no large-scale engagements.

Own Situation:

0400 Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Theodosia from anti-submarine operations in the area between Cape Chauda and Cape Meganom. No incidents.

0430 Two naval gunnery lighters, 1 naval ferry barge, 4 harbor defense boats and 4 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. Nothing to report.

0500 Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba. No enemy forces were sighted in the reconnaissance line between Anapa and Maria Magdalena Bank. The coast was not shelled during the night.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: wind mainly E, force 5 - 6, light showers, visibility 8 - 12 miles, temperature at night around 15° C.

As the easterly wind would probably allow operations close to the Caucasus coast, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 4 boats in lurking positions off Cape Idokopas on the night of 6/7 June to attack enemy supply traffic. Outward passage via the coastal route as far as Anapa. Return passage should be commenced at 0100, proceeding in patrol line from Cape Utrich as far as off Anapa to intercept any enemy forces returning from shelling the coast near Anapa. Further passage via route Brown. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed of U 9's position.

When asked to report on the submarine attack on the "Celeno" convoy off Sevastopol on 24 May, Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla stated that the submarine had not been attacked because she was within the enemy declared area. This line of reasoning cannot be accepted, because the presence of the submarine was proof that at least in that part of the declared area there were no mines. Moreover, the mines which had been swept in other parts of the declared area had depth settings of 3 - 4 meters and motor minesweepers would therefore be is no danger in this area. Every effort should immediately have been made to attack the submarine. Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and Commander, Convoys and Escorts were given instructions to this effect today.

The sinking of a submarine reported by mine-exploding vessel No. 192 on 5 June has not yet been confirmed. Immediate operations by the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, intended on receipt of the report from the mine-exploding vessel on the probable sinking, could not be carried out because of the weather.

The Crimea group was ordered to put out whenever the weather improved and to remain at the place of sinking until at least the evening of 7 June i.e. 48 hours after the probable sinking.

In reply to a query from Group Command, I reported today that, at my request, Dockyard Control Staff was already examing possibilities for conversion of naval ferry barges into Q-ships. At the same time, I requested an investigation of whether vessels could be withdrawn from the Mediterranean for this purpose, as there were no other vessels in the Black Sea suitable for conversion into Q-ships.

The proposed bombardment of the enemy battery at Sambek which recently shelled Taganrog was carried out by Army coastal artillery. Results: Out of 2 enemy guns, one was destroyed by a direct hit, while the other was damaged and had to be taken in tow. Taganrog has not been shelled since.

Today, Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla received the operational orders for the proposed bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari (see War Diary 3 June). Execution on receipt of codeword "Almeria". Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, 1st Air Corps and the relevant Army commands have been informed. For the orders, see Appendix.

Today, I ordered the next surface watching radar set to be installed near Anapa as quickly as possible to protect the Anapa convoys. Recent air raids have revealed that the enemy is concentrating on Anapa convoys which are regularly attacked by low-flying planes with well-trained crews, while the attacks on Crimea convoys and ports are generally carried out from high altitudes with less efficiency. Anapa convoys, therefore, have priority for fighter escort. The fighters can only arrive in time if the enemy planes have already been detected by radar as they approach from the east. They can then take off from Anapa airfield before the enemy attack. Owing to lack of forces, continuous fighter escort for naval ferry barge formations on the Cape Takil-Anapa route and back cannot be provided by 1st Air Corps. The urgent need for radar sets at coastal stations within the command

area must be ignored in favor of this priority task of defense.

1920 Braila reported that 2 Danube towing barges had sunk through internal explosion near Isacza and that 2 more were damaged. Investigation gave clear proof of sabotage.

1930 Temriuk reported that the coastal defense boats were unable to put out because of the weather.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of a few bombs on Mariupol and 6 - 8 bombs on Berdyansk, there were no air raids.

Novorossisk reported mortar fire and shelling by anti-tank guns and heavy artillery on the sites at the east harbor and on the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Search for ground mines in Beresanski channel was completed without result. The route from Odessa to Ochakov was reopened to traffic.

Only minesweeping planes were employed in Kerch Strait. No mines were swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. No Anapa convoys ran owing to the weather.

c. No Temriuk traffic owing to the weather.

d. Convoy traffic in the Black Sea was also impeded by the weather. Two destroyers and 2 motor minesweepers put out to pick up steamer "Fituz" (7,300 tons) which was proceeding from the Aegean Sea.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0315 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 8 vessels off the beachhead; at 0320 1 vessel and at 0430 10 vessels, all unidentified, off Ghelenjik; at 0750 1 large freighter, 2 minesweepers and 3 small vessels leaving Ghelenjik. Air reconnaissance disproved Naval Port Commander's report that it was a 4,000-ton freighter.

Daylight reconnaissance by 1st Air Corps detected 1 torpedoboat, course southeast, 7 miles south of Tuapse at 0620; at 0515 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 2 motor minesweepers and 2 patrol vessels, course northwest, 10 miles northwest of Sochi; at 0755 1 large and 4 small vessels, stopped, 12 miles south of Sochi; at 0751 2 motor minesweepers, course southeast, 17 miles south of Adler; at 0705 1 patrol boat, stopped, 13 miles south of Sukhum and at 0740 1 patrol boat, stopped, 25 miles northwest of Poti. At noon and in the afternoon small vessels were observed between Ghelenjik and the beachhead.

Owing to bad visibility and strong fighter defenses, the ports were only partially reconnoitered. Ghelenjik at 0440: 5 coastal vessels. Sukhum at 0745: 1 freighter of 800 tons, 2 coastal vessels totaling 600 tons, and 8 boats.

No reconnaissance results from the Sea of Azov because of the weather. Night reconnaissance was not flown.

At night, Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located 1 destroyer, probably in the Sochi area and 1 probable torpedoboat off Tuapse. Submarines detected: 5 in the central to western Black Sea. Normal activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

0615 E-boats S 26, S 28, S 40 and S 52 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. From 2200 to 0100, the boats were in lurking positions close to Cape Idokopas. Apart from 1 M.T.B. and 2 patrol vessels which in hazy weather were sighted only at very close range, no traffic was observed. Bad visibility and almost impossible weather conditions (NE winds up to force 6 - 7, sea 4 and high swell) would only have allowed weapons to be used from time to time. Return passage close to the coast via Anapa.

0830 Motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166, which were in the area south of Kerch Strait to patrol the area where the submarine was thought to have been sunk by mine-exploding vessel No. 192 and naval ferry barges of Anapa convoy No. 105, put in to Kerch because of the weather. The boats were ordered to put out again for observation after the weather improved. Up to now, there is no confirmation of the destruction of the submarine.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: N - NE winds, force 4 - 5, later veering to NW, fair to cloudy, visibility 10 - 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: E - NE winds, force 5, fair, heavy clouds and showers in the afternoon, visibility 12 - 15 miles, temperature at night 13° - 15° C.

In this weather, the proposed transfer of naval gunnery lighter No. 3 from Temriuk to Kerch was not possible. Throughout the day, the wind exceeded the force forecast and convoy traffic and minesweeping were also considerably impeded. The E-boats were also prevented from operating.

3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Constantza reported that 4 more naval gunnery lighters (Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11) had been completed.

Since all recent Crimea convoys had reported the regular appearance of enemy reconnaissance planes off the Crimean coast between 0400 and 0800, night convoys will have to put out earlier from their ports of departure to reach their ports of destination by daybreak at the latest. I ordered that the convoys running from Yalta to Theodosia should put out from Yalta by 1800 at the latest.

The radar apparatus destined for Cape Takil has been brought to Anapa where it will be installed. It was already in Kerch and would therefore be the first to be in working order. In view of the particular importance of this reporting station (see War Diary 6 June), I ordered that a naval communications officer should be stationed in Anapa.

1930 Naval ferry barge F 401 which put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty at 1930 had to put in again at 2015 because of the weather and the high sea.

Enemy Air Activity:

At about 0730 the "Dresden", "Woywoda" and "Ditti" convoy, which was proceeding from Yalta to Theodosia escorted by 2 naval ferry barges, was attacked by 5 bombers off Ivan Baba after sighting by reconnaissance planes. Some 40 bombs were dropped from an altitude of 1,600 meters. No damage. Our 2 cm. and 7.5 cm. guns were unsuccessful. Two bombers attacked again at 0755, dropping 16 accurate bombs which were outmaneuvered by "Woywoda". The ship's anti-aircraft guns and shore anti-aircraft guns near Ivan Baba had no success. Of the ports, only Mariupol was visited by isolated planes which dropped no bombs.

Minesweeping Activity:

Owing to suspected minelaying north of the approach buoy, the Sevastopol FZ-group swept that area eight times more with towed loop gear. No mines swept.

In Kerch Strait, minesweeping planes searched for ground mines between Cape Chroni and Cape Achilleon. No mines swept.

The FZ-group and the group with skid gear did not operate because of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was greatly impeded by the weather.

b. Anapa convoys Nos. 106 and 107, each comprising 6 naval ferry barges, did not put out because of the weather. The 2 convoys are now proposed for 8 June.

c. Supply traffic in the direction of Temriuk was also impossible because of the weather. Only the naval ferry barges of Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 24 commenced return passage to Genichesk at 1000 with 2 tugs and 2 lighters. Due to a reduction in the water level in Temriuk, naval ferry barge F 537 ran aground and did not put out.

d. Most of the convoys close to the Crimean coast and in the western Black Sea were suspended because of the weather. For the same reason, the towed convoy which put out from Sevastopol to Odessa at 0400 anchored in Eupatoria Bay at 0830 and put in to Eupatoria later.

Tanker "Fituz" is on passage from the Bosporus to Constantza escorted by 2 destroyers and 2 motor minesweepers.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0340 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 3 vessels, course southwest, putting out from Ghelenjik and at 1915 15 coastal vessels and 3 M.T.B.s also putting out from Ghelenjik. At 1255 6 Russian flying boats circled in the area between Ghelenjik and the beachhead.

Daylight air reconnaissance was inexhaustive because of bad visibility: at 0638 1 patrol boat, stopped, 15 miles west of Tuapse; at 0640 1 submarine, course southeast, 15 miles west of Adler.

At 0655 6 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons were detected in Ghelenjik (oblique view). No other ports were reconnoitered because of the weather.

No traffic was observed in the Sea of Azov. Primorsko Akhtari was photographed in preparation for the proposed bombardment. Two small armed vessels (probably motor minesweepers) were lying in the harbor. Two small coastal vessels and 40 boats were in the roads northwest of the harbor. An anti-aircraft site and 2 unmanned artillery sites were sighted north of the town and 1 manned artillery site east of the town inside the curving railroad line.

Night reconnaissance was not flown.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia reported no activity of heavy naval forces. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea and 1 south of Kerch Strait. Normal activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

0100 U 18 reported by short signal that she was 36 hours from Constantza.

No operations or patrol lines were ordered today because of the weather. The night passed quietly.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: light variable winds, sea wind in the afternoon, fair to cloudy, visibility above 10 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: N - NE winds, force 4, in Kerch Strait also NE, force 5, cloudy, visibility 8 - 12 miles, temperature at night 14° - 15° C.

After Anapa convoys had been suspended on 6 and 7 June owing to the weather, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus today sent out convoys Nos. 106 and 107 with an interval of 3 hours between them. Each convoy comprised 6 naval ferry barges. Since, in view of the present air situation, this will lead to an undesirable concentration of naval ferry barges off Anapa, I requested fighter protection from 1st Air Corps whenever I received the report of sailing. 1st Air Corps granted the request. I instructed Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to run only one convoy per day in future, as the danger for the boats and their crews would be too great while no regular fighter escort can be flown.

1135 Three IL 2 planes attacked the second convoy (No. 107) 2 miles southeast of Maria Magdalena Bank and 4 more IL 2 planes and 2 Rata planes again attacked it at 1155. Some 80 small bombs were dropped and fighters machine-gunned the boats. No major damage or casualties. Our 7.5 cm. barrage fire probably shot down 1 plane and the 2 cm. ship's anti-aircraft guns scored several hits.

The fighters escorting the convoy took immediate action and shot down 6 enemy planes.

After this success, 1st Air Corps explained that occasional passage of Anapa convoys in today's strength would be very desirable from the point of view of the Air Force as this type of operation offered good opportunities for the employment of fighters. Despite today's success, I cannot agree because, even today despite the fighter escort with the convoy, the enemy was able to carry out raids and drop 80 bombs on the target. The fact that no losses occurred was at least partly a matter of good fortune.

1200 Motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 put in to Kerch. Further examination of the area where mine-exploding vessel No. 192 was believed to have sunk a submarine gave no confirmation of a sinking. No further oil patches were observed after the depth charge attack. Destruction of the submarine seems unlikely and the search has been abandoned.

It was a pity that, although she had used up her depth charges, mine-exploding vessel No. 192 had not remained in position by the patch of oil after dark and asked for support by radio. The weather

was still good and motor minesweepers putting out at once could have completed the destruction with depth charges. This lack of experience of the commanders in my command must be remedied.

In the early morning, Anapa was again shelled from the sea, presumably by small vessels. Since Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk and the observation post on Sapun hill near Myshako had also reported heavy traffic to and from the beachhead last night, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was given the following order:

1. On the night of 8/9 June, 4 boats are to put out to attack the beachhead traffic and the vessels lying at the jetties with guns and torpedoes.

2. The boats will return from the operational area as far as off Anapa in reconnaissance line formation to intercept any enemy forces returning from shelling Anapa and then from off Anapa to Ivan Baba via route Brown.

1730 Four E-boats put out from Ivan Baba for operations.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the anti-submarine operations between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil during the night of 8/9 June in accordance with the operational order issued on 5 June.

1930 Three E-boats put out from Theodosia for this operation.

1830 Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and motor minesweeper R 30 put out from Kerch for Temriuk, from where the operation against Primorsko Akhtari was to be carried out.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2, naval ferry barge F 401, 4 harbor defense boats and 6 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duties.

2000 The routes between Kherson and Odessa and Nikolaiev were again closed to traffic by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea because of suspected minelaying. One mine had been found today during a check sweep for ground mines.

Enemy Air Activity:

In addition to the above-mentioned attack on Anapa convoy No. 107, single planes flew over the Crimean coast near Yalta without attacking.

Novorossisk reported no air raids but the usual artillery fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

The FZ-group with towed loop gear and oropesa gear continued minesweeping in Kerch Strait as scheduled.

Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines over the new Kerch Strait-Temriuk route. No mines swept.

At 1600 2 motor minesweepers (RA) put out from Kerch for Berdyansk (special task to escort a coal convoy). The rest of the motor minesweepers (RA) were not employed because they were being repaired.

Supply Traffic:

a. Despite unfavorable weather, ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys Nos. 106 and 107, each comprising 6 naval ferry barges, ran as scheduled. (For air raid, see above.)

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 30 put out from Kerch at 0330 for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 2030 the vessels commenced return passage.

At 1150 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 25 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges and 1 tug.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran as scheduled. The "Fituz" convoy put in to Constantza at 1155 from the Bosporus.

CONFIDENTIAL

9 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the following vessels: at 0200 8 vessels unloading at landing point 3; at 0320 14 vessels proceeding from the beachhead to Ghelenjik followed at 0330 by 4 more; at 1200 2 coastal vessels putting out from Ghelenjik to the south and 1 coastal vessel putting in to Ghelenjik; at 1720 1 M.T.B. putting out from Ghelenjik; at 1900 3 minesweepers, 6 towing vessels and 12 lighters putting out from Ghelenjik to the south.

At 1016 daylight air reconnaissance reported 1 tug and 2 lighters, course northwest, 5 miles west of Ghelenjik; at 0920 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons 14 miles northwest of Poti; at 0850 1 coastal vessel and 1 small vessel, course southeast, 10 miles west of Poti.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik: 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons, 5 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s and some 45 boats.
Tuapse at 1000 (oblique view because of fighter defenses): 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 5 coastal vessels.
Sukhum at 0900: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 freighter of 800 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, 1 minesweeper, 2 motor minesweepers and 9 small boats.
Owing to the oblique view, only 1 battleship was identified in Poti, with 3 boats off the harbor.

One small armed vessel, course north, was sighted in the eastern Sea of Azov. Enemy ships in Yeisk: 2 motor minesweepers, clearly identified, 4 more probable motor minesweepers, 1 small coastal vessel, 7 large boats and 50 small boats. Eight seaplanes in the naval air base.

Dive-bombers and ground attack planes of 1st Air Corps destroyed 47 fishing boats in the lagoon area northeast of the Kuban estuary.

At 2250 night air reconnaissance detected 1 small vessel (presumably a submarine), course northwest, 11 miles southeast of Cape Chauda. At 2320 4 boats, course southeast, were sighted off the Myshako beachhead. No traffic was detected between Ghelenjik and Tuapse.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia detected 1 submarine off the central part of the east coast. Otherwise no locations.

Own Situation:

0030 Anapa reported that the town had been shelled from the sea at 2330 and 0015. In each case 1 salvo was fired which fell short of the target. The vessels were not identified.

0415 E-boats S 501, S 504 and S 505 put in to Theodosia from anti-submarine operations in the area between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. No submarines were located, no incidents.

0630 In the operation against Myshako beachhead, 1st E-Boat Flotilla (S 26, S 42, S 46 and S 52) sank 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 1 lighter of 300 tons. As both the vessels were lying at the jetties, the jetties may also have been damaged. The E-boats then operated against the enemy forces which shelled Anapa at about 2400. Although they proceeded in reconnaissance formation at high speed, no enemy vessels were sighted. At 0300, the E-boats commenced return passage and put in to Ivan Baba at 0630.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Kerch: W - SW winds, force 3, freshening with sea wind in the afternoon, fair, visibility 10 - 15 miles.

Novorossisk: W - NW winds, force 2 - 3, fair, visibility above 10 miles, temperature at night 14° - 15° C.

As the wind was expected to abate by the evening, bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari was ordered for the coming night. When the NW winds temporarily increased, the boats' sailing was postponed to the latest possible time i.e. 1500.

Despite an improvement in the weather, the naval gunnery lighters were unable to put out at 1500, because they had all meanwhile been left high and dry in the side channel at Temriuk harbor when the tide ebbed. Attempts to tow the boats off did not succeed until approximately 1800, when it was too late to carry out the operation as scheduled.

The fact that the 0.8 meter-draft naval gunnery lighters were high and dry when they were meant to be at operational readiness is proof of the lack of experience of the young commanders

(midshipmen, Construction Branch). Even the flotilla commander cannot balance their deficiencies, as he has not sufficient experience in commanding such a formation.

This lack of training and experience of the commanders has been evident in nearly all the flotillas of my command and it makes planning and execution of more complicated operations very difficult. These observations refer not only to naval gunnery lighters, naval ferry barges and armed fishing vessels but even to 30th U-Boat Flotilla and 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas, where approximately half of the commanders are new and completely inexperienced.

Believing that the enemy would not expect another operation against Myshako, I ordered 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla to repeat yesterday's operation against the beachhead on the night of 9/10 June.

At 1900 the E-boats put out for the operation as ordered.

At 1440 off Eupatoria, an enemy submarine attacked the steamer convoy ("Charkov" and "Varna") which had put out from Sevastopol at 0910. The planes providing close protection sighted 3 torpedo tracks which presumably were fired at long range. One torpedo exploded, but no hits were scored and the convoy continued passage.

1325 U 9 put in to Theodosia from operations. She had encountered strong air patrols and fast submarine chasers and motor minesweepers on intensive anti-submarine operations off Adler and Tuapse. On 28 May, a submarine chaser attacked her with 54 depth charges. Slight damage, many leaks. She had been repeatedly bombed. No valuable targets were met in either operational area; coastal traffic between Tuapse and Idokopas could not be attacked because it was too close to the coast.

On the same evening, I ordered the commander to report to me in person so that I might assess his ability. His report gave me and the flotilla commander who was also present some valuable clues.

1610 U 18 put in to Constantza from operations. She reported that on 30 May she had fired a torpedo at a minesweeper from a range of 2,000 meters. It missed. She had been unable to attack the escorted steamer as there was an enemy plane overhead. Also on 30 May she attacked a 1,000-ton tanker with 3 patrol vessels but was again

unsuccessful. Long depth charge pursuit. Further attacks were impossible because the convoy was sailing off Poti. The operation was impeded by the breakdown of the attack periscope due to leaks. Strong air patrols and planes were observed in cooperation with M.T.B.s.

In the afternoon, an Arado plane which made an emergency landing in the sea off Sevastopol was salvaged by harbor defense boats and naval ferry barges and towed in to Sevastopol.

1945 The coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk for the patrol line off the Kuban estuary.

2130 Three boats of Coastal Defense Flotilla, Sea of Azov put in to Genichesk from patrol duty in the coastal area as far as Cape Kasantip.

Since air reconnaissance had reported an enemy submarine 11 miles southeast of Cape Chauda, 11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered at 2345 to put out for anti-submarine operations in the Cape Chauda area.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on convoys throughout the day. Some bombs were dropped on Taganrog and Berdyansk. Planes penetrated twice to Mariupol, but dropped no bombs.

Novorossisk reported bombing of the southern sector and artillery, mortar and anti-tank bombardment of the sites at the west harbor and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

While preparing the coastal route in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait by searching for ground mines, minesweeping planes swept 2 mines. It was not necessary to close the route as the normal width of fairway was free of mines. Vessels were instructed to pass the line of buoys at a distance of 30 meters.

The FZ-group searched for moored mines with oropesa gear and towed loop gear in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait.

Owing to a breakdown of the motor generator, the group with skid gear south of Pavlovski had to break off operations.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled. Withdrawal of the combined operations ferries reduced the total tonnage transported.

b. Anapa convoys:

At 1715 convoy No. 108 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anchored off Zhelezni Rog.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1900 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 30 put in to Kerch on return passage. At 1835 convoy No. 31 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1330 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 25 put out from Temriuk on return passage to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges.

At 1300 convoy No. 26 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the attempt to tow off naval ferry barge F 137 on 9 June had failed.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. All the convoys close to the Crimean coast ran at night and encountered no enemy forces. For submarine attack on the "Charkov" and "Varna" convoy, see above.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The following movements of ships were reported by Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk: at 0330 4 vessels proceeding from the landing place towards Ghelenjik; at 0605 7 vessels off Cape Doob; at 1635 3 M.T.B.s, at 1830 1 patrol vessel and at 1900 2 minesweepers, 2 motor minesweepers, 1 sea-going tug, 5 tugs and 2 large and 10 small lighters put out from Ghelenjik.

In good visibility, daylight air reconnaissance detected only slight enemy traffic off the Caucasus coast: at 0805 1 coastal vessel, lying stopped, off Ghelenjik and at 0735 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0805: 5 coastal vessels totaling 500 tons, and some 40 boats.
Tuapse at 0756: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 2 freighters, each 800 tons, 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, and some 15 boats.
Sochi at 0740: 1 minesweeper, 2 coastal vessels totaling 400 tons, and several boats.
Gagri at 0730: 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons.
No ships were observed in Adler, Gudauty, Sukhum or Ochemchiri. The above information may be incomplete as a result of oblique observation.

No enemy boat traffic in the Sea of Azov. In Primorsko Akhtari 1 motor minesweeper, 1 small armed vessel and some 36 boats were identified at 0641.

At 0055 night air reconnaissance located 1 small vessel, presumably a minesweeper, course northwest, 5 miles southwest of Sochi. During the night, Anapa airfield located 2 more vessels off the coast about 7 km. west of Anapa.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia detected no activity of large surface vessels. Five submarines were located, one of which was in the western Black Sea.

All quiet on the Army front at the Kuban bridgehead apart from German and enemy artillery fire.

Own Situation:

0430 Temriuk reported that the boats on coastal patrol duty off the Kuban estuary observed lively air

activity at sea. Otherwise no incidents.

0400 Two E-boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla which put out for anti-submarine operations in the area off Cape Chauda put in to Theodosia again at 0400 without sighting the enemy.

S 26, S 28, S 40 and S 45 of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were in the operational area south of Myshako from 2330 to 0100. Apart from 3 small patrol vessels, no traffic was observed. The landing places could not be shelled because of bad visibility and a high swell from the west. No enemy forces were sighted from the reconnaissance line off Anapa. At 0615 the boats put in to Ivan Baba.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: S - SE winds, force 3 - 4, increasing with sea wind in the afternoon, cloudy, isolated thunderstorms, visibility 8 - 12 miles, temperature at night 14° - 15° C.

In view of the favorable easterly winds, I ordered execution of the operation against Primorsko-Akhtari. At 1330 naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweepers R 163, R 166 and R 30 put out from Temriuk for the operation.

When enemy boats were again detected by planes in the inshore waters near Anapa, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 4 boats in patrol line off Cape Utrich at right angles to the coast during the night of 10/11 June. The boats were to operate singly, standing on and off at slight speed 14 miles from the coast along the patrol line. Their task is to attack and destroy approaching enemy forces. Outward and return passage via the coastal route. At 1900 4 boats put out from Ivan Baba.

11th E-Boat Flotilla will spend the coming night in port.

In answer to an inquiry from Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea, I decided that, even on the Constantza-Bosporus route, no ships of more than 3,000 tons should run in convoy traffic from 3 days before to 3 days after full moon. Although up to now enemy submarines have not been so numerous in the southwestern Black Sea as off the Crimean ports, the danger to convoys is no less, as submarines could easily control the approaches to the Bosporus. The drop in transportation figures caused by the suspension

of these convoys is certainly considerable, but it must be accepted as we cannot afford to lose further large vessels in view of the few ships available in the Black Sea.

At 1425 10 miles northwest of Anapa, 7 bombers, protected by 12 fighters, attacked Anapa convoy No. 108, which was on return passage. The enemy formation was scattered by accurate defensive fire and the planes could only drop about 8 bombs. The escorting fighters then machine-gunned the boats. No damage, 2 men wounded. Our own escorting fighters shot down 5 enemy planes.

1st Air Corps has now promised direct protection for Anapa convoys. As they have only a limited number of fighters available, only one convoy can be escorted each day. I am therefore adhering to my intention to run only 1 Anapa convoy per day.

Examination of naval ferry barge F 332 which was set on fire in an air raid on 30 May (see War Diary) revealed that the boat cannot be repaired. When all useful parts are removed, the wreck will be blasted.

1400 U 19 put out from Constantza for operations. Outward passage via the southern route to the Batum-Poti operational area.

1805 After refueling, U 9 commenced return passage to Constantza. She had orders to proceed along the Crimean coast at a distance of 15 miles from the shore during the first night to intercept any of the enemy submarines frequently located in this area.

1945 The coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duties.

Enemy Air Activity:

Of the ports in the Crimea, Yalta, Balaklava, Sevastopol and Alushta all had several air raid alarms during the day. No bombing, no damage.

Single planes dropped bombs on Berdyansk during the night. Slight damage in the town area.

Novorossisk was not bombed. Slight artillery fire on the site at the east harbor.

Minesweeping Activity:

When the search for ground mines was completed, the Odessa-Ochakov route was reopened to shipping. Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol swept the area

off the harbor entrance without result. Minesweeping was carried out in Kerch Strait as scheduled.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 108 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. For air raid, see above.

At 1730 convoy No. 109 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1830 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 31 put in to Kerch on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges. At 0745 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 26 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1230 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter commenced return passage to Genichesk.

d. In Mariupol-Taganrog traffic, 1 convoy of tugs and lighters escorted by boats of Coastal Defense Flotilla put in to Taganrog at 0335.

Crimea convoys (night traffic) and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

11 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0400 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 18 vessels making off from the beachhead towards Ghelenjik; 14 of them put in to Ghelenjik. At 1915 2 M.T.B.s, 2 minesweepers, 7 tugs and 10 lighters put out from Ghelenjik. Vessels are again assembling south of Ghelenjik.

Despite good visibility, daylight air reconnaissance detected only slight traffic off the Caucasus coast: at 0910 1 minesweeper and 1 patrol boat, course northwest, 9 miles south of Sukhum; at 0950 1 minesweeper, course southeast, 16 miles south of Ochemchiri; at 1034 1 gunboat, course southeast, 7 miles south of Sochi; at 1037 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, 5 miles west of Sochi.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 1100 (partially covered by clouds): 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, 2 motor minesweepers, 1 small armed vessel and some 35 boats.
Tuapse at 0830: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 8 coastal vessels totaling 4,500 tons, 6 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s, 1 minesweeper, 1 small armed vessel and 25 boats.
Sochi at 1035: 2 coastal vessels and some boats.
Sukhum at 0709: 1 freighter of 4,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 coastal vessel, 1 minesweeper, 2 motor minesweepers and 10 small boats.
Ochemchiri at 1000: the 2 submarine tenders, 4 submarines, 4 motor minesweepers, 2 coastal vessels totaling 500 tons, and 15 boats; 1 submarine and 1 M.T.B., course southeast, off the harbor. Comparison with the number of ships lying in port during the last few days revealed that coastal vessels must have been at sea, proceeding especially between Ghelenjik and Tuapse, although they were not observed by air reconnaissance.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. At 0925 2 motor minesweepers, another probable minesweeper and some 40 boats were observed in Primorsko Akhtari.

Owing to failure of the Lichtenstein set, night air reconnaissance was broken off before the plane sighted any enemy vessels.

In the afternoon Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located 1 destroyer at sea, 7 submarines in the area south of Theodosia and west of Sevastopol and 2 more in the western Black Sea.

No important actions on the Army front. An enemy attack against 49th Army Corps front was repulsed with high losses for the enemy.

Own Situation:

At 2230 near Taganrog, a small-scale enemy landing from 4 rowing boats equipped with machine-guns was repulsed by Army units after a short engagement.

0235 The "Tisza" and "Prodromos" convoy, which was proceeding from Constantza to Sevastopol, escorted by 2 Rumanian destroyers and 2 naval ferry barges, was shelled by shore batteries while passing Cape Tarkhankutzki because it did not answer the request for recognition signals. No hits.

0300 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 carried out the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari. Hits were observed on the jetties and harbor installations. Ammunition used: 440 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. During the bombardment, 3 armed vessels put out from the harbor and our escorting motor minesweepers opened fire with their 3.7 cm. guns. When hits were observed, the vessels returned to the harbor. Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla ordered the naval gunnery lighters to change target to these vessels, but this measure failed because of the poor training of the crews of the lighters.

On return passage at about 0420, a fast vessel was sighted coming from the north. After accurate fire from the formation, she at once put up a smoke screen. Pursuit by motor minesweepers was broken off because of the enemy's superior speed. At 0545 2 bombers attacked the formation. Our guns scored a hit on a plane; 1 man baled out and the plane made off to the shore rapidly losing height.

Despite good weather, the naval gunnery lighters were leaking and shipping water. At 1730 naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 and motor minesweepers R 163, R 166 and R 30 put in to Kerch. At 1800 naval gunnery lighter No. 3 put in to Temriuk.

0400 Temriuk reported that from 0030 to 0230 coastal defense boats off the Kuban estuary heard engine noises in a southwesterly direction which faded to the north. Also lively air activity.

0545 E-boats S 28, S 42, S 46 and S 52 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. No enemy forces were sighted from lurking positions off Cape Utrich.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light, variable winds, sea wind in the afternoon in coastal areas, force 4 - 5, fair, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night 12° - 15° C.

Despite the fact that our fighters were employed to protect the naval gunnery lighter formation, 1st Air Corps also detailed the fighter escort requested for Anapa convoy No. 109 between Zheleznì Rog and Anapa.

Before the proposed installation of quadruple anti-aircraft guns on board the naval ferry barges running to Anapa, the barges' frames have to be reinforced. At present, 1 naval ferry barge is being converted in Kerch dockyard. There is enough room for a quadruple gun at the forward gun position. Training of the gun crews will be carried out.

1330 U 19 broke off passage to the operational area because of a leak in the outer exhaust valve. She returned to Constantza.

2000 At 2000 off Alushta, Rumanian coastal batteries machine-gunned the "Swoyswome", "Vitez" convoy which was proceeding from Yalta to Theodosia escorted by 4 naval ferry barges. Some 200 rounds were fired, no hits. According to a report from Naval Shore Commander, Crimea, coastal authorities had been informed of the passage of the convoy.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that at present only 20 heavy combined operations ferries could still be employed in ferry traffic in Kerch Strait because of reductions in the fuel allocation. As the demand for the transportation of 3,000 tons to Gotenkopf cannot therefore be guaranteed, I requested Army Group A to arrange to maintain the former fuel quota.

1945 The coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk.

Enemy Air Activity:

Ak Mechet was attacked twice and some 25 bombs were dropped. A heavy air raid was carried out on Taman in which 100 bombs were dropped. Night attacks were made on Anapa (25 bombs). No damage was reported, no casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

FZ-boats, motor minesweepers (FR) and mine-sweeping planes searched for ground mines in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait as scheduled. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 109 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 110 is ready to put out on 12 June with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1810 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 32 put out from Kerch for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys (night traffic) and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

During the night, Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed no shipping between the beachhead and Ghelenjik owing to fog. In the evening at 1900, 18 vessels were sighted putting out from Ghelenjik.

At 0810 daylight air reconnaissance reported 3 M.T.B.s, course northwest, 10 miles southwest of Sukhum; at 0920 1 motor minesweeper and 1 minesweeper 8 miles south of Tuapse; at 1000 1 submarine submerging 27 miles southsouthwest of Anapa; at 1426 1 submarine (probably one of our own) 30 miles southwest of Tuapse. Another submarine was sighted in the western Black Sea 50 miles east of Varna at 1037.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0943: 5 coastal vessels totaling 700 tons, and some 25 boats.
Tuapse at 0919: 1 freighter of 4,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 4 minesweepers, 5 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s and 25 small boats.
Sochi at 0902: 2 motor minesweepers, 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons and 1 small coastal vessel.
Sukhum at 0805: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons, and 15 boats.

No enemy shipping traffic was observed in the Sea of Azov.

Shipping in Primorsko Akhtari: 1 small armed vessel and some 30 boats. Three small boats lay stopped 15 miles southwest of Primorsko Akhtari.

Night reconnaissance detected no enemy vessels.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no movements of large surface vessels. In all, 12 submarines were detected, 2 west of Sevastopol and 2 south of the Crimean coast.

Own Situation:

0400 Temriuk reported that the boats on coastal patrol off the Kuban estuary had nothing to report. Lively air activity was observed along the coast.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light variable winds, in coastal areas sea wind up to force 5 in the afternoon, fair to cloudy, isolated thunderstorms in the east, visibility 15 - 20 miles, temperature at night 13° - 16° C.

1130 U 9 put in to Constantza from operations. On return passage from Theodosia, the boat operated against enemy submarines close to the Crimean coast without success.

The "Celeno" convoy which was proceeding from Constantza to the Bosporus located 1 enemy submarine in the area east of Kaliakra. The place of location was immediately patrolled by one of the escorting motor minesweepers. At 1300 "Xanten" with search gear and "Siegfried" with revolving directional hydrophones put out for the same area. No results have so far been reported.

1240 At 1240 off Eupatoria, 5 Russian bombers attacked the "Birgit" and "Helvetia" convoy which was proceeding from Sevastopol to Sulina escorted by 2 Rumanian gunboats and 2 naval ferry barges. Steamer "Birgit" was hit by 2 bombs and she sank at 1305. The crew was rescued by the escort vessels. During the attack, Rumanian fighters were with the convoy, but no planes were reported to have been shot down.

Since Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported regularly each evening that many enemy vessels sailed from Ghelenjik to assemble some 10 miles to the south, I intend to employ 1st E-Boat Flotilla against this assembly area during the coming night. It can be assumed that the ships are supply vessels which pass here at a certain distance from the coast on passage to the Myshako beachhead (possibly to avoid the minefield laid by 1st E-Boat Flotilla).

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to detail a group of 3 boats to operate between Ghelenjik and Cape Idokopas. Outward and return passage via the coastal route and Anapa.

A further group of 4 boats was ordered to sail along the coast in patrol line from Cape Olginskaya to Cape Idokopas. The boats were to proceed to the northwest from Tuapse and should arrange passage to reach Cape Idokopas at about 0030. Return passage via Anapa and route Brown at maximum cruising speed.

1700 Four boats of the second group put out from Ivan Baba for operations, followed at 1800 by 3 boats of the first group.

1st E-Boat Flotilla reported S 49 again operational. At 1925 the boat put out from Constantza for Ivan Baba.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 4 boats in the patrol line off Cape Utrich at right angles to the coast during the night of 12/13 June. They were to operate against the enemy naval forces which had repeatedly shelled the coast near Anapa during the last few nights. The boats should stand on and off independently in the patrol line at slight speed.

1945 Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put out from Theodosia for the operation (4th boat was not operational).

Both flotillas were informed of the simultaneous operations of 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas.

Today, with Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla whom I ordered to come to Simferopol for this purpose, I thoroughly discussed the execution of the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari by naval gunnery lighters on 10/11 June. The aim of the discussion was to increase our successes in the proposed repetition of the operation. With this object in view, I raised the following objections:

1. The bombardment was begun too early, while it was still too dark and the range was too great. Consequently, the target was inaccurately fixed and the effect of our guns too inexactly observed.

2. During the bombardment, the boats set course for west too soon, thereby increasing the range even more. Thus, the naval gunnery lighters finally fired from a range of 7 - 9 km. (10 km. from the railroad station) and were therefore unable to determine the target accurately or to observe where the shells landed. The flotilla commander was induced to turn off prematurely when he obtained a sounding of 2.40 meters. This measure was unnecessary because the chart showed depths of 2.80 to 3.00 meters - a sufficiently accurate estimation - and the naval gunnery lighters draw only 0.80 meters.

3. The main task was the destruction of enemy forces. Thus, all naval gunnery lighters should have attacked the 3 enemy vessels immediately when they left the harbor. The

flotilla commander did intend to do this, but his orders transmitted aboard motor minesweeper R 163 were not understood and he was therefore only able to train the 3.7 guns of the motor minesweepers upon the enemy vessels. This failure was due to inadequate training of the crews of the naval gunnery lighters.

4. The average rate of fire of 5 - 6 seconds was much too fast. At that speed, no accurate observation of impacts could be made, the firing data could not be corrected and, in any case, there was no need to fire at that rate.

I thoroughly discussed these points with the flotilla commander. I recognized that the main cause of these major errors was the inadequate training and lack of navigational and tactical experience of the commanders. Since, as midshipmen of the Construction Branch, they do not have the requirements for successful command of a naval gunnery lighter, there is no guarantee that results will be better in future. There is, however, no doubt as to their keenness and perseverance. I therefore applied for the commanders to be relieved and replaced by suitable young naval officers.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was then informed that a repetition of the operation against Primorsko Akhtari was proposed for 13/14 June. Execution in accordance with previous orders.

I ordered naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 9 to be transferred from Constantza to Sevastopol with the next suitable convoy. Training of the crews will be continued until the boats sail.

30th U-Boat Flotilla, Constantza reported U 18 operational from 15 June.

1945 Naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

2310 Anapa reported that the town was again shelled from the sea between 2300 and 2400. 15 rounds from approximately 7.5 cm. caliber guns were fired. No damage.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of the attack on steamer "Birgit", there were no air raids on convoys or naval forces.

Kerch was repeatedly bombed in the evening. Three bombs landed in Naval Port Commander's area

and 1 bomb hit the buildings of the motor pool. One building and 1 truck were damaged, no casualties.

Novorossisk reported no air raids, only slight artillery and mortar bombardment of the southern sector and the site at the east harbor.

Minesweeping Activity:

A drifting inertia contact mine was shot up during operations of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol between Sevastopol and Cape Lukull.

In Kerch Strait, mine-exploding vessel No. 192 checked the coastal route between Kerch and Cape Takil four times. No mines were swept. Minesweeping planes also checked the same route for ground mines and swept no mines.

The FZ-group, Genichesk checked the approaches on both sides of the line of buoys to a width of 200 meters. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 110 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1700 convoy No. 111 put out from Kerch with 5 naval ferry barges and anchored off Zhelezni Rog in the evening.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 32, which consisted of 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs, 2 lighters and naval gunnery lighter No. 1, returned to Kerch in 2 groups.

At 1250 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 27 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran as scheduled.

For sinking of steamer "Birgit", see above.

CONFIDENTIAL

13 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0000 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 6 vessels at landing points 2 and 3 (Myshako) and between 0300 and 0400 a total of 15 vessels entering Ghelenjik. In the evening at 1900, 20 vessels put out from Ghelenjik to assemble south of Ghelenjik and 8 vessels made off from Cape Doob on a westerly course.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast and the ports as far as Sukhum. Detailed results: at 0710 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, high speed, 30 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0655 1 coastal vessel and 1 gunboat, course southeast, 8 miles south of Adler; at 0601 2 small coastal vessels, course north, 7 miles south of Cape Pitsunda; at 1010 1 freighter and 1 passenger steamer of 2,500 tons off Trabzon (Turkish coast).

Photographic reconnaissance of the ports revealed an increasing number of coastal vessels and small armed vessels in the north Caucasus ports.

Ghelenjik at 0730: 11 coastal vessels totaling 1,300 tons, 4 motor minesweepers and 7 M.T.B.s; 1 towed convoy with 2 lighters putting out.
Tuapse at 0520: 1 freighter of 4,900 tons (?), 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, 2 minesweepers, 5 motor minesweepers, 10 M.T.B.s and 20 small boats.
Sochi at 0535: 1 torpedoboat putting in, 8 motor minesweepers, 1 patrol vessel and 30 boats.
Sukhum at 0600: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 6 coastal vessels totaling 600 tons and 15 boats.

Reconnaissance over the central and western Black Sea did not sight the enemy formation reported by S 49 (see "Own Situation"). The area off the Turkish coast from Cape Sinope to Samsun could not be fully examined because of high drifting fog. One submarine was attacked with 4 depth charges 97 miles southwest of Sevastopol; apart from an oil patch, no result was observed. One enemy reconnaissance plane was shot down by our fighters in the area north of Sevastopol.

No shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. At 1245 3 small armed vessels (apparently motor minesweepers) and 15 boats were sighted in Yeisk. In Primorsko Akhtari at 1030, there were 4 small armed vessels and 25 boats. Nothing of importance was observed in the fisheries.

Night reconnaissance was not flown.

Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia located no large surface vessels and only 2 submarines. Air reconnaissance, however, detected at least 9 submarines with focal points south of Kerch Strait and in the area west of Sevastopol. This concentration led to the supposition that during the full moon period submarines and surface vessels were cooperating to attack our convoy traffic at night. Countermeasures have already been ordered insofar as no convoy traffic is to run at night during this period.

Own Situation:

0000 U 24 reported from the operational area that she had unsuccessfully fired a torpedo at coastal vessels lying at the jetties (presumably the Mesib estuary). Otherwise no enemy traffic in the Tuapse-Ghelenjik operational area.

0400 At 0045 the coastal defense boats off the Kuban estuary encountered a small enemy vessel. Naval ferry barge F 401 pursued her to the north-west, but owing to the enemy's superior speed had no success. At 0400 the coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk.

0444 E-boat S 49, which was proceeding from Constantza to Ivan Baba, reported an encounter with 1 destroyer and 5 M.T.B.s about 100 miles south of Cape Tarkhankutzki. After a long pursuit by 3 M.T.B.s, she shook them off.

0440 The boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Theodosia from the patrol line west of Cape Utrich. At 2329 several M.T.B.s attacked S 501 and S 505, using 4 cm. guns from a range of 4,000 meters. For a considerable time, S 501 was pursued westwards, first by 4 then by 2 enemy vessels. At 0014 S 504 and S 505 had a short engagement with 1 enemy M.T.B. at a range of 200 meters. After 6 rounds had been fired, S 506's Breda machine-gun broke down. A torpedo attack was impossible because of the broad angle on the bow and the high speed of the enemy boat. From long range, the M.T.B. shelled S 505 with 4 cm. guns, but no hits were scored.

This engagement showed that patrol duty off the Taman coast was not at all suitable employment for 11th E-Boat Flotilla. The E-boats' armament was inferior to that of the enemy M.T.B.s and submarine chasers and they could not use their torpedoes against the M.T.B.s. With their slight armament, these MAS-boats should be used for defensive operations only, such as the

attacking of large enemy vessels (destroyers and torpedoboats) with torpedoes if they approach our coast and also for alerting the coast promptly when such forces approach. They might also be employed on dark nights for offensive operations against enemy supply traffic.

0700 Ivan Baba reported that during the night 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were in lurking positions between Ghelenjik and Cape Idokopas and 4 boats were in patrol line between Cape Idokopas and Tuapse. Neither group encountered shipping traffic or patrol vessels. At 2151 the northern group was attacked with 4 - 6 bombs. No damage.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: variable winds, force 1 - 2, sea wind on the coast in the afternoon, force 4 - 5, fair, visibility 8 - 12 miles, temperature at night 14° - 18° C.

3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Kerch was ordered to repeat the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari during the night of 13/14 June. At 1020 naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 put out from Kerch as ordered with motor minesweepers R 30, 163 and 166.

If 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla does not encounter any enemy armed vessels in Primorsko Akhtari, we can assume that they have again been sent out against the Kuban estuary as they were this morning. They were then able to escape because of their superior speed. With a view to countering such thrusts with fast forces, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 4 boats in patrol line north of the Kuban estuary from 45° 29' N, 37° E to 45° 34' N, 37° 25' E from 2100 to 0330. Their task was to attack and, if necessary, pursue any enemy forces sighted. Only boats with 4 cm. guns were to be employed on this operation.

With these measures we hope to be certain of intercepting any enemy naval forces which may be at sea.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed of the employment of our patrol vessels in the inner Temriuk Bay.

Four more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were lying at immediate readiness in Ivan Baba to counter the enemy surface operations against the Crimean coast to be expected during the nights of the full moon period (ASM Gkdos. Chefs. 141 AI of 22 May 1943).

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401 and coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duty.

Naval Group South proposed the following disposition of new batteries in the command area:

1. For the area of Naval Shore Commander, Crimea: four 15 cm. guns for Cape Chauda and 4 for Cape Feolent.

2. For the area of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus: four 15 cm. guns for Anapa, 4 for Cape Panaghia and 4 for Cape Takil.

Owing to this increase in the construction program of Naval Fortifications Engineer Staff, the engineer forces available are not sufficient to set up all the batteries at the same time. I therefore issued the following plan of priority, so that the tactically most important batteries should be ready for action before the winter begins i.e. approximately by the end of October.

Priority A:

1. Battery Anapa:	4 15 cm. guns.
2. Battery Panaghia:	4 15 cm. guns.
3. Battery Cape Takil:	4 15 cm. guns.
4. Battery Sevastopol-North:	4 15 cm. guns.
5. Battery Cape Fonar:	(change of position with Battery Gursuf).
6. Completion of Battery Cape Ili:	4 12.7 cm. guns.
7. Completion of Battery Kherson:	4 20.3 cm. guns (captured Rumanian guns).

Priority B:

1. Battery Cape Chauda:	4 15 cm. guns.
2. Battery Sevastopol-West:	4 12.7 cm. guns.
3. Command posts of group artillery commanders in Sevastopol and Kerch.	

Priority C:

Battery Cape Feolent:	2 15 cm. twin turrets.

Disregarding this priority plan, the batteries in the Sea of Azov area will be set up independently by a squad of fortifications engineers and battery crews. The crews of the other new batteries will be formed as soon as possible from the men of disbanded naval port commands and they will then take part in the construction work.

Minesweeping Activity in Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 checked for ground mines in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Motor minesweepers (RA) marked the new route from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait as far as Temriuk with buoys. The FZ-group, Genichesk checked the harbor fairway on both sides of the line of buoys. No mines swept.

Minesweeping planes swept 1 mine 60 meters outside the fairway in Beresanski channel.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 111 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges.

At 1810 Anapa convoy No. 112 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1820 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 33 put out from Kerch for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1400 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 27 commenced return passage to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys (night traffic) and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 419 carried mines from Skadovsk to Sevastopol.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Owing to ground fog, Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed no traffic to the beachhead during the night or in the morning. At 1905 16 vessels were sighted putting out from Ghelenjik to the west.

At 1112 off the Turkish coast near Zonguldak, daylight air reconnaissance sighted 1 convoy of 7 merchant ships, tonnage presumably varying from about 800 to 1,000 tons. At first their size was considerably overestimated by the observer.

The following vessels were sighted in the area off the Caucasus coast: at 0806 2 coastal vessels, course northwest, 5 miles southeast of Ghelenjik; at 0920 1 M.T.B., course southeast, 10 miles northwest of Sochi; at 1030 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 15 miles west of Ochemchiri; at 1015 another motor minesweeper, course northwest, 15 miles southeast of Ochemchiri; at 1010 1 destroyer, course east, 12 miles northeast of Batum; at 1110 1 coastal vessel putting out from Tuapse.

In comparison with the last few days, the number of enemy ships in port showed no essential change. A total of 18 coastal vessels was lying in Tuapse and Ghelenjik.

In the morning, the following traffic was detected in the Sea of Azov: at 0330 3 guardboats 15 miles west of Achuevski and 1 small armed vessel, course south, 35 miles west of Akhtari; at 0340 1 convoy with 4 small coastal vessels and 2 patrol vessels, course north, 10 miles north of Akhtari; at 0345 1 small armed vessel, course east, 20 miles south-southwest of Mariupol.

Night reconnaissance was flown from Novorossisk to Batum without locating any enemy vessels.

No movements of large surface vessels were detected in radio traffic by Main Naval D/F Station, Mamaia. Normal activity of small vessels off the Caucasus coast. Submarines located: 1 in the western Black Sea and 1 off the east coast.

Own Situation:

While escorting the "Swoyswome" and "Woywoda" convoy from Theodosia to Yalta, naval ferry barge F 121 struck a mine off Cape Meganom during the

night. After an unsuccessful attempt at salvage by naval ferry barge F 217 which was detailed for the task by the convoy commander, F 121 capsized 2 miles off the coast in Sudak Bay and sank in the evening. One man missing. All secret books were salvaged.

According to a report from the commander of F 217, several drifting canisters with rods on top were sighted in the bright moonlight. As they might possibly be drift mines (type of periscope mine), the Theodosia-Yalta route was temporarily closed and shipping warned. Three motor minesweepers and 2 motor minesweepers (RA) were ordered to check coastal route Brown with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant, on 15 June.

The second bombardment of Akhtari was carried out in the early morning, as ordered, by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 with the assistance of motor minesweepers R 163, R 166 and R 30. Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was in command of the whole formation. Approaching on course 090°, the formation opened fire approximately 1 mile north of the approach buoy at Akhtari at 0412. They shelled harbor installations and the beach from a range of 7,000 meters. Further bombardment was carried out as they made off slowly to the west in port quarterline formation (30°). Hits were observed and heavy smoke developed in the harbor installations and on the beach. No large vessels were identified in the harbor.

Shortly after opening fire, naval gunnery lighter No. 1 altered target to 2 motor gunboats (approximately the size of motor minesweepers) which put out from the harbor. The boats replied with 4.5 cm. guns but, after some accurate salvoes from the naval gunnery lighter, they put up a smoke screen and made off at high speed on reverse course into the inner bay. The motor minesweepers could not operate against the motor gunboats because of the great distance involved (about 8,000 meters) and the speed and course of the enemy boats.

During the bombardment, a shore battery in Akhtari fired back from a range of approximately 15,000 meters. Guns were 15 cm. or less. Impacts landed 500 meters astern of the formation. The battery was not detected and our boats did not answer its fire. At 0445 the boats terminated the bombardment.

On return passage, an enemy motor gunboat which was proceeding close to the coast on a northerly course was shelled from a range of 10,000 meters,

approximately 10 miles north of Achuevski. Thereupon, an enemy battery opened fire, presumably with 7.5 cm. guns, from approximately 12 km. northeast of Protoka estuary. No hits were scored. The motor minesweepers did not operate against the motor gunboat because of the great range involved and the enemy's speed.

Further return passage was without incident and at 1810 the formation put in to Kerch.

0440 Naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. The boats heard engine noises from an enemy vessel which later was engaged by our own E-boats in the outer patrol line.

0540 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Kerch from the operation in the Sea of Azov. Throughout the night, the boats were in the patrol line north of Temriuk. At 0138 they were engaged by 3 enemy motor gunboats. At 0157 they opened fire at a range of 2,500 to 3,000 meters. The enemy replied to the fire with 4 to 6 4.5 cm. guns and light guns. From time to time, our boats were also shelled from the shore by heavy caliber guns (approximately 7.5 cm.). Our own measures were repeatedly impeded by the temporary breakdown of the 4 cm. anti-aircraft guns on board S 40, S 46 and S 49. For that reason, the engagement was broken off at 0228 6 miles west of Achuevski.

Thus the 5 small armed vessels which were detected by aerial photographic reconnaissance as M.T.B.s or motor minesweepers were intercepted in these 2 operations, but they were not destroyed.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: variable winds up to force 2, freshening in the afternoon to SW - W, force 4, fair, later clouding over from the west, visibility 8 - 10 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: light winds, sea wind on the coast, fair, visibility 15 miles, temperature at night 15° - 18° C.

As enemy activity in the eastern Sea of Azov is expected to increase in the coming night after the attack on Primorsko Akhtari, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat last night's operation north of Temriuk during the night of 14/15 June. At 1845 the 4 boats lying in Kerch put out for the operation.

Four more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to be at immediate readiness again from 2000 to 0030 because Russian surface forces were expected to operate off the Crimean coast during the nights of the full moon period.

All operational boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to repeat the operation in the patrol line west of Cape Utrich.

1800 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 9 commenced passage from Constantza to Sevastopol with "Ship 19" and "Xanten". The intention is to transfer them as quickly as possible to the Sea of Azov.

The net barrage group reported that the anti-torpedo barrage had been laid in Kerch Strait between Kossa Tuszla and Pavlovski harbor.

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats (including 6 combined operations boats) put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty.

In view of the present enemy situation in the Sea of Azov, I intend to strengthen the patrol line off the Kuban estuary by employing the strongly armed tender "Grafenau" there also. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus has been ordered to transfer "Grafenau" from Kerch to Temriuk.

The increasing enemy activity detected in the Sea of Azov was also apparent in the Gulf of Taganrog. I learned later that on 13 June 1 large armed coastal vessel had been observed between Mariupol and Berdyansk off Ursuf. She had a short engagement with a Rumanian battery. I therefore considered it necessary to transfer naval gunnery lighters to Berdyansk and Mariupol as soon as possible. The speed is necessary because, after the 2 bombardments of Primorsko Akhtari, the enemy will probably soon take measures to defend the coast of Taganrog Bay also.

Fighter protection for our convoys between Mariupol and Taganrog has been assured by 4th Air Corps. Procedure will be in line with the escort assignments of 1st Air Corps flown for Anapa convoys. Fighters flying to and from the front will proceed via our supply route.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea has been informed that in future Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea will also, where possible, detail German fighters to protect valuable convoys, since Rumanian fighter protection proved insufficient in the case of "Birgit".

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on convoys or naval forces. No damage was inflicted during night attacks on Kerch and Anapa.

Novorossisk reported the usual artillery fire and a few bombs.

Minesweeping Activity:

Today 3 moored mines were swept by motor minesweepers on route Green off Cape Midia. Presumably, they were mines from the northwestern part of our own minefield section S 57 which the formation had crossed. Motor minesweepers examined the route four more times and found no mines.

Three motor minesweepers (RA) and mine-exploding vessel No. 192 swept for ground mines and, with oropesa gear, for moored mines on the proposed new coastal route south of Zhelezni Rog. No mines swept. They also acted as escorts for Anapa convoy No. 112. The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept the coastal route in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait.

While marking the route from Kamish Burun to the new fish-salting factory harbor, motor minesweepers (FR) detected 3 shallow moored mines south of this route, presumably from an old Russian minefield. A group of naval ferry barges then checked the area but found no mines.

Minesweeping planes swept for ground mines in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait without result.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait today carried 200 tons of supplies less than scheduled, because combined operations ferries were almost entirely engaged in troop transportation. Otherwise nothing to report.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 112 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges.

At 1845 convoy No. 113 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

I have decided that Anapa convoys should also run at night in future, but I directed Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to organize the convoys during full moon periods so that the

area between Cape Takil and Anapa should not be passed at night from 3 days before to 3 days after full moon.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1810 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 33 put in to Kerch on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1130 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 28 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 419 continued to transfer mines from Skadovsk to Sevastopol.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1905 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed a total of 26 vessels leaving Ghelenjik, among them 2 patrol vessels, 4 minesweepers, 1 sea-going tug, several small tugs and 12 lighters. The vessels again assembled south of Ghelenjik. At 1915 tugs with barges in tow and patrol vessels put out from Ghelenjik.

Daylight air reconnaissance sighted the following vessels: at 0738 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0755 1 minesweeper and 1 motor minesweeper, lying stopped, off Tuapse; at 0736 1 M.T.B., course southeast, 15 miles east of Tuapse; at 0718 1 motor minesweeper, lying stopped, off Sukhum and 1 minesweeper, course northeast, 8 miles south of Sukhum; at 0709 1 patrol boat, lying stopped, and 1 coastal vessel, course northwest, 15 miles south of Sukhum; at 0712 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, 15 miles south of Ochemchiri; 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, 5 miles south of Ochemchiri. In the course of the day, 1st Air Corps reported lively traffic of coastal vessels and minesweepers between Tuapse and Ochemchiri, mostly course southeast.

The ports were reconnoitered (oblique view) and showed no essential changes compared with the last few days. The steamer of 4,000 tons was still in Tuapse.

Considerable traffic was again observed off the Turkish coast: at 0630 1 tanker of 6,000 tons 34 miles west of Kerempeh Burnu; 1 tanker of 3,000 tons off Hisaroni (air grid square 2234); 1 freighter of 2,000 tons and 1 freighter of 1,000 tons 10 miles northwest of Karasu (air grid square 0285); 1 ship of 10,000 tons off Zonguldak. One freighter of 1,500 tons in Giresun and another in Trabzon.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. Yeisk at 0639: 8 small armed vessels, presumably motor minesweepers, and some 30 boats. Primorsko Akhtari at 0658 (aerial photograph): 4 small armed vessels, presumably motor minesweepers, and some 90 boats.

Night reconnaissance of the Caucasus coast as far as Tuapse was uneventful. At 2300 2 probable flying boats were observed 15 miles southwest of Ghelenjik.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no movements of large surface vessels detected in radio traffic. Submarines located: 3 off the east coast, 1 south of Sudak and 2 in the western Black Sea.

Own Situation:

0116 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 9, which put out for Sevastopol on 15 June, returned to Constantza because of suspected mines off Cape Midia. They put out again for the east at 1600, but had to stop at Sulina because of the weather.

0135 The naval ferry barges which were on passage from Sevastopol to Skadovsk (F 418 and F 419) sighted a surfaced enemy submarine off Cape Tarkhan. Clearly visible in the moonlight, the boat was shelled by F 418 with 7.5 cm. guns and she submerged after 8 rounds without replying to the fire. Depth charges were dropped at the place of submerging, but no results were observed. The naval ferry barges then continued passage.

0330 Motor minesweepers R 163, R 166, R 30, RA 52 and RA 54 put out from Kerch to sweep the coastal route from Kerch Strait as far as Sevastopol.

0400 The patrol boats put in to Temriuk. Apart from lively air activity at sea, no incidents were observed in the coastal area.

0540 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 49 put in to Kerch from the patrol line in Temriuk Bay. The boats had observed no enemy vessels in the operational area and reported no incidents.

0610 S 501, S 504 and S 505 of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were in lurking positions west of Cape Utrich from 2230 to 0300. At 2245 8 enemy M.T.B.s (6 large and 2 small), course north, were sighted in air grid square 6285 at a range of 5,000 meters. Owing to the broad angle on the bow and the high speed of the enemy, a torpedo operation was impossible. Our own boats occupied lurking positions in air grid square 6286 to meet the enemy boats when they returned but did not sight them again.

At 0610 the boats returned to their base in Theodosia.

Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla believed that the enemy boats had been laying mines close to the coast between Anapa and Kerch. As this supposition cannot be definitely confirmed, Anapa convoys will run as scheduled without advance check sweeps.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: light variable winds, fair, visibility above 10 miles.

Yalta - Kerch: N - NW winds, force 4 - 5, abating in the afternoon and evening, fair, visibility 12 - 15 miles.

Novorossisk: S winds, force 3, freshening to N - NW, force 4, in the afternoon, fair, visibility 10 - 15 miles, temperature at night 15° - 20° C.

Last night's operation by 11th E-Boat Flotilla again showed that the MAS-boats are ill-suited for the patrol lines close to the Caucasus coast because of their inferiority in armament compared with the M.T.B.s which appear in greater numbers. Especially during the next nights of the full moon period when the enemy's superior armament would be decisive, this kind of operation cannot be considered for the MAS-boats, especially since they have not yet been equipped with smoke-producing apparatus. I plan to keep them in Anapa roads at night with periods of immediate readiness, but I have not ordered any operations today as the operational boats have been out on 2 successive nights.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispose 4 boats, equipped with 4 cm. rapid-firing guns, in lurking positions west of Cape Utrich during the night of 15/16 June. Their task is to operate against enemy forces approaching the coast. Outward and return passage via the coastal route. Operations cannot be carried out further south at present because of the short nights and the full moon.

Four more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla at the base were ordered to immediate readiness to counter any enemy night operations close to the Crimean coast.

1730 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Kerch for operations.

From the operational area, U 24 reported sinking a single escort vessel. She had 2 torpedoes left. A probable Q-ship was detected in the operational area.

2010 Naval ferry barge F 401 and "Grafenau" put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty. Owing to the weather, the other boats did not operate.

2200 Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 put in to Kerch from Temriuk.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on convoys or naval forces. At 1245 Theodosia was raided. Six planes dropped 30 - 40 bombs on the harbor and town from an altitude of 5,000 meters. The captured Russian submarine chaser was seriously damaged by splinters and 1 sailor was slightly wounded.

Night attacks on Taganrog, Senaya and Novorossisk caused no damage.

Novorossisk reported the usual artillery fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Three motor minesweepers and 2 motor minesweepers (RA) checked route Brown with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant. No mines swept.

3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla extended the channel through Ilichevka minefield (route Green) to the west by a further 300 meters. They swept the area seven times without result. Minesweeping will be continued on 16 June.

Minesweeping in Kerch Strait was carried out as scheduled. Minesweeping planes and the FZ-group with towed loop gear swept the coastal route in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait four times. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Anapa convoy No. 113 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges.

b. Temriuk convoys:

At 1805 Kerch - Temriuk convoy No. 34 put out for Temriuk with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Genichesk - Temriuk convoy No. 28 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

c. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

CONFIDENTIAL

APPENDIX I

Admiral, Black Sea. 6 June, 1943

Serial No. Gkdos. Chefs. 150 A I.

To:
Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Kerch
Commander of motor minesweeper R 163, Kerch.

Copy to:
Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Kerch
1st Air Corps, Simferopol
Army Group A, Simferopol
17th Army H.Q. via Naval Liaison Officer
Naval Group South, Sofia.

A. Situation:

The enemy is bringing light naval forces to the Sea of Azov across the mainland. According to air reconnaissance, the main bases are Yeisk and Primorsko Akhtari. Air reconnaissance detected the enemy boats which appeared off the Kuban estuary during the night of 4/5 June returning to Primorsko Akhtari on 5 June.

B. Orders:

1. The vessels lying in Primorsko Akhtari are to be attacked and sunk.

2. The operation will be carried out by

a. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3.
b. Motor minesweepers R 163, R 166 and R 30.

3. Command: Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla on board R 163.

4. Task:

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 are to shell the landing stages, any vessels in the roads or on the beach, the harbor area and, if possible, the railroad station of Primorsko Akhtari.

Motor minesweepers are to provide navigational aid and protection.

5. 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla will sail from Temriuk on X-day at about 1400, while the motor minesweepers put out from Kerch to meet the naval gunnery lighters at the entrance to Temriuk channel. 8 June is proposed as X-day. Preparations should

be made accordingly.

The operation will be carried out on receipt of dated codeword
"A l m e r i a",
date denoting X-day.

Bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari should be carried out at daybreak on X+1 day.

6. Until nightfall on X-day, the vessels will approach on a deceptive course of about 340°, then set course for the lighthouse at Akhtari.

7. After carrying out the bombardment, the boats should return to Temriuk at maximum cruising speed at a distance of 5 - 10 miles from the coast.

8. If one naval gunnery lighter should break down during outward passage, the operation is to be carried out. A motor minesweeper should be detailed to remain with her as escort if necessary. If 2 naval gunnery lighters should break down, the operation is to be canceled.

9. A gunnery officer should be embarked in each naval gunnery lighter for fire control. Command of the vessel will remain in the hands of her commander.

10. Aerial photographs will be taken of Primorsko Akhtari one day before the operation is to be carried out. These photographs will be delivered to Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla before he sails.

C. Execution of the bombardment:

1. The formation should approach Primorsko Akhtari Bay from a northwesterly direction in port quarterline (30°).

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla on board motor minesweeper R 163 should be in position to starboard abreast the tactical control vessel of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla.

2. When in position, the approach buoy of Primorsko Akhtari should bear 220°; at a distance of about 1 mile from it, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla should alter course to approximately 270° in line ahead, keeping the approach buoy on the port side.

After altering course, R 163 should be on the disengaged side of the tactical control vessel of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla (see sketch).

3. Immediately after altering course, the boats should open fire. When the range is found, shelling should be rapid and effective. The bombardment

should be carried out at a reduced speed until the vessels are ready to make off. The course of departure will be left to the initiative of the flotilla commander and will depend on the situation.

4. Distribution of fire from the right side.

   Control vessel and vessel No. 2 should fire at the jetties and the vessels lying at and between the jetties and on the beach. Vessel No. 3 should shell the railroad station area if it can be observed, otherwise the vessels and the banks north of the jetties should be attacked.

5. If our formation should be shelled by shore batteries while entering Primorsko Akhtari Bay, the batteries should be attacked by all naval gunnery lighters until they alter course to the west. Then, when course is altered, the control vessel and vessel No. 2 should shell the targets as in C.4. Vessel No. 3 should continue to fire at the shore batteries.

6. During the bombardment, motor minesweepers R 166 and R 30 should protect the formation on the seaward side.

7. Ammunition used during the bombardment should amount to two-thirds of the supply of 8.8 cm. ammunition.

D. 1st Air Corps has been requested to detail fighter or heavy fighter protection for the formation on X-day from about 1500 until nightfall and on X+1 day from about 1 hour after daybreak until the formation enters Temriuk. In view of the present enemy situation, the execution of this operation will depend on the provision of fighter or heavy fighter protection at least on X+1 day.

E. Communications arrangements:

   See Appendix.

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APPENDIX II

Communications Arrangements for Operation "Almeria"

1. General:

Until contact is made with the enemy, radio silence should be maintained and broken only by express orders from the flotilla commander. Wherever possible, short signals should be transmitted as in para. 5.

2. Radio frequency:

Command wave East. Apart from the boats, the following stations will also be on this wavelength:

Naval Radio Station, Simferopol: control
Naval Radio Station, Kerch
Naval Radio Station, Mariupol
Naval Radio Station, Yalta
Naval Radio Station, 17th Army H.Q.

Shore radio stations have been ordered to listen especially for the boats. Naval Radio Station, Mariupol will repeat all radiograms for the boats half an hour after their transmission by control. Shore radio stations will repeat messages transmitted by the boats if control reports that they were not understood.

For accurate tuning, the boats should switch to command wave East 3 hours before sailing.

3. Coding material:

Code M is to be carried aboard motor minesweepers only. In addition, the entire flotilla will carry radio manual South. Before putting out, naval gunnery lighters should hand in code M. Motor minesweepers should use the inner setting from the day of sailing until the end of the operation. The other cylinders should be put ashore before sailing.

4. Change of frequency:

Frequency should not be altered from command wave East during the operation.

5. Short signals:

Signals should start "DD".

R P M Am breaking off the operation because of the weather.
L H A Am returning to the port of departure.
H D G Enemy air reconnaissance.
F R A Am being attacked by enemy plane(s).
S L A Am being attacked by enemy naval forces.
V A M Operation carried out as scheduled.
V T R Am being driven off by enemy forces.
V B K Enemy attack was repulsed.
B S C Bombardment carried out.
B L R Am forced to break off operations because of damage.

Short signals should not be encoded.

Grid square data according to Air Force terminology.

Numbers should be transmitted in plain language.

Short signals should be used sparingly, at the most 2 groups with numbers.

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

16 - 30 JUNE, 1943

PG/31534

CONFIDENTIAL

16 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

From 2300 to 0030 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 6 vessels at the Myshako landing stages, at 0320 4 vessels and 2 M.T.B.s making off from the beachhead to the southeast and in the evening 16 vessels (6 coastal vessels, 3 tugs, 4 lighters and 3 patrol vessels) putting out from Ghelenjik.

At 0645 daylight air reconnaissance sighted 1 tug with 1 lighter, course southeast, 15 miles west of Tuapse; at 0918 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, and 1 small armed vessel, course southwest, off Poti. At 0945 the following vessels were sighted off the Turkish east coast: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons in Trabzon roads, 1 freighter of 2,500 tons 20 miles east of Trabzon and 1 freighter of 1,500 tons off Rizeh.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 1010 (aerial photograph): 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, 6 motor minesweepers, 21 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel and 30 boats. Tuapse at 0715 (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,400 tons, 1 motor minesweeper, 9 M.T.B.s, 5 small armed vessels and 20 boats. The ports from Sochi to Ochemchiri could not be photographed because of poor visibility. At 0835 1 tanker of 7,000 tons was observed in Batum roads.

No enemy shipping traffic was observed in the Sea of Azov.

There was no night reconnaissance.

In the evening, Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported 1 destroyer off the southern part of the east coast. Submarines located: 5 in the Crimean area and the western Black Sea and 5 more off the Caucasus coast. Normal activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

0012 The commander of Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 28, which was on return passage to Genichesk, reported that lighter No. 1353 had struck a mine north of Cape Sjuk. The lighter was towed to the coast in a sinking condition and beached near Mamaruskaya, where the possibilities of salvage are being investigated.

0400 Naval ferry barge F 401 and "Gravenau" put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. They had nothing to report apart from heavy air activity.

0600 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from the patrol line west of Cape Utrich. While on passage to the operational area, the boats were machine-gunned by enemy planes at 2116. No damage or casualties. Nothing to report from the operational area.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: variable winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind in the coastal areas up to force 4 in the afternoon, fair, visibility about 15 miles, temperature at night 17° - 22°C.

I ordered that the 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla which had been operating in the Sea of Azov and near Cape Utrich for 3 consecutive nights should have a night in port. The other 4 boats will again be at immediate readiness in Ivan Baba for action against possible enemy operations off the Crimean coast. According to today's reconnaissance reports, such operations must be expected again, just as during the last full moon period. All coastal stations have been alerted and ordered to transmit all sighting reports immediately, so that the E-boats can be sent out promptly.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to transfer from Kerch to Berdyansk with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 during the night of 16/17 June and to continue passage to Mariupol on the following night. The vessels will be escorted by motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 which will give navigational assistance.

The naval gunnery lighters and motor minesweepers (RA) were ordered to refuel in Mariupol at once and to be ready at 1800 for a special operation. (For orders for special operation - bombardment of Yeisk - see Appendix to Admiral, Black Sea Gkdos. Chefs. 157 A I.)

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported from Constantza that, owing to the increased sand in the mouths of the Danube off Sulina, the Sulina approach point would have to be moved further east and route Green altered accordingly. As this means that the route will be too close to sections S 1 and S 2 of the Rumanian minefield, I have agreed to the proposal of the Commander, Convoys and Escorts that the exact position should be determined and these minefield sections swept if necessary, especially

since most of the mines have probably been moved by drift-ice in the past 2 winters, so that the minefields would not be very effective in any case.

1156 At 1156 6 miles southeast of Cape Chauda, one of our own planes, which seemed to be making straight for our naval ferry barge convoy, was attacked with 7.5 cm. and 2 cm. guns. The plane did not answer the request for recognition signals, at least no recognition signals were observed by the barges. No damage was caused.

1400 U 18 put out from Constantza via the northern route for the operational area north of Tuapse. U 19 left at the same time via the southern route for the operational area off Batum.

2000 On account of the weather, only "Grafenau" put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

No daylight attacks on convoys or naval forces. During the night of 15/16 June, Kerch was heavily attacked by 40 to 50 planes which dropped many incendiary and high-explosive bombs. Minor naval damage was caused. In 7th Battery, Naval Gunnery Detachment 601, one 60 cm. searchlight was put out of action.

Anapa was attacked from the air five times: 16 bombs were dropped, but no damage was reported.

Fifteen bombs were dropped on the northern part of Novorossisk. Artillery and mortar bombardment of harbor sites and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Route Brown which was closed from Theodosia to Yalta on 14 June was reopened after the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla checked the route yesterday. Orders were issued for 17 June to check the route from Sevastopol to Cape Takil with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant. In view of the danger of air attacks in the area east of Theodosia, motor minesweepers R 166 and R 163 were ordered to arrange passage to reach the Cape Takil area at daybreak on 18 June.

The clearing of the Ilichevka minefield was continued to widen the route.

The FZ-group swept the southern entrance to Kerch Strait three times with towed loop gear and noise box (turbines) and the group with skid gear swept the same area four times. No mines swept.

Minesweeping planes searched the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 put out to pick up Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 29 north of Kerch Strait, because lighter No. 1353 had struck a mine.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 114 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1810 convoy No. 115 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 38, comprising 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter, put in to Kerch on return passage in 2 groups at 1620 and 2340 respectively.

At 1130 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 28 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges and 1 tug. (Lighter No. 1353 struck a mine and was beached near Cape Sjuk: see "Minesweeping Activity", 16 June.)

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. At 1735 naval ferry barges F 418 and F 419 put out from Skadovsk to transport mines to Sevastopol.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0320 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 4 vessels making off from the beachhead in the direction of Cape Doob and 5 vessels proceeding from Cape Doob to the beachhead. During the night, 5 vessels were unloaded at landing points 2, 3 and 6.

At 0615 off Tuapse, daylight air reconnaissance sighted 3 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, course southeast, accompanied by 2 motor minesweepers and 2 escort vessels; at 0549 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, off Gudauty; at 0500 1 M.T.B., course southeast, off Sukhum and 1 small vessel and 1 minesweeper putting in to Sukhum.

Enemy shipping in the Caucasus ports:

Ghelenjik at 0630 (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,200 tons, 2 motor minesweepers, 19 M.T.B.s and about 50 small and large boats.
Tuapse at 0615 (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, 7 M.T.B.s and 1 floating crane.
Sochi at 0600 (aerial photograph): 6 motor mine-minesweepers and 2 M.T.B.s.
No vessels in Adler or Gudauty.
Sukhum at 0510 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 freighter of 800 tons, 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons, 1 M.T.B., 1 small armed vessel and 12 boats.
Ochemchiri at 0520 (aerial photograph): the 2 submarine tenders, 5 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, and 10 boats.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Air reconnaissance in the western Black Sea over the Turkish coast reported the following: at 0900 10 small and medium merchant ships in Zonguldak; at 1015 2 small freighters, course east, 20 miles east of the Bosporus; 1 small freighter in Hisaroni and 1 in Kerempeh Burnu; at 1520 7 merchant ships of up to 4,000 tons each between Zonguldak and Hisaroni; at 1600 3 freighters, each about 1,000 tons, and 1 freighter of 3,000 tons, course east, northwest of Karasu; at 1629 1 vessel of 3,000 tons, course east, 10 miles northeast of the Bosporus.

In the forenoon, D/F Station, Eupatoria located 1 destroyer off the central part of the east coast. Submarines detected: 3 in the east coast area and 3 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area. Lively activity of small vessels.

Own Situation:

During the night, a coastal defense boat which was on a westerly course south of Taganrog sighted 16 small motorboats proceeding at high speed 4 miles south of the coast. They were making for the Don estuary. The type of vessel could not be identified. A short time afterwards, 2 more boats were sighted on a westerly course. After requesting recognition signals, they fired their 2 cm. guns at random. The German boat returned the fire and the enemy boats disappeared to the west.

Mariupol reported that during the night several enemy planes were identified at sea south of Byelosaraika. Minelaying is suspected, because several impacts were heard on the water surface.

Acting on this report, I temporarily placed FZ-boats Nos. 23 and 29 and motor minesweeper FR 4 which were in Genichesk at the disposal of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine for minesweeping tasks. The boats were ordered to transfer to Berdyansk on 18 June and return to Genichesk after carrying out the minesweeping operations.

During the evening and at night, Taganrog was shelled from the direction of Sambek, probably by an armored train with 12.2 cm. guns. Minor damage was caused to the tracks in the harbor area, where 20 shells landed. At 0230 the guns started up again and our own batteries returned the fire.

0200 Naval Port Commander, Ochakov reported that 2 enemy planes flew over the Dnieprovski estuary from Pervomeisk to the east. Altitude 80 to 100 meters. Minelaying activity was not observed. Since mines are suspected in the fairway east of Ochakov, the Dnieprovski estuary was closed to shipping.

0330 "Grafenau" put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Nothing to report.

0730 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 put in to Berdyansk. No incidents during passage across the Sea of Azov. At 1800 the formation continued passage to Mariupol as scheduled.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: E - SE winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon, force 4 - 5, veering S - SW, force 4 - 5, fair, increasing cloud later, visibility 12 - 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: S - SE winds, force 2 - 3, increasing with sea wind in the afternoon to force 4 - 5, fair, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night 13° - 20° C.

0950 The convoy on passage from Theodosia to Kerch was attacked off Cape Opuk by 12 Russian bombers and 6 fighters with about 60 small bombs and machine-guns. The convoy consisted of freight towing vessel "Vitez" with lighter "Gerasimus", tug "Wagrein" with lighter "Evertie Orion" escorted by naval ferry barges F 144, F 313, F 333 and F 368. The convoy was attacked several times from altitudes varying between 25 and 500 meters. Lighter "Gerasimus" which was carrying hay and ammunition was set on fire by a direct hit and, as the fire could not be controlled, the crew had to abandon ship. Naval ferry barge F 144 was riddled by about 100 splinters and bullets above and below the waterline. Naval ferry barge F 368 was pierced about 20 times. Casualties: 1 man seriously wounded and 1 slightly wounded on board the naval ferry barges. Three enemy planes were shot down by accurate defense fire from all anti-aircraft guns. As the enemy aircraft formation made off, our fighters arrived and shot down 2 more planes.

As "Gerasimus" was still able to float, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus sent tug "Wagrein" escorted by 2 naval ferry barges to salvage her in the afternoon. Salvage was impossible, however, as she was still on fire and her ammunition was continually exploding. She sank south of Kerch Strait in the evening.

1100 U 24 reported an encounter with an enemy submarine. Mistaking the submarine for one of our own boats, she did not attack. U 24 is 35 miles west of Ochemchiri.

On 15 June, U 9 was transferred to Galatz for a thorough overhaul which was to take about 6 weeks.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea does not plan to dispatch "Ship 19" or "Xanten" singly on anti-submarine operations between 0900 and 1600 because, with the present air situation, even west of the Crimean coast the ships would be in too great danger without fighter protection. I agree with this decision and have ordered that during

the day the vessels should, if possible, be employed only on escort duty. However, if they do locate any submarines, they should maintain contact with the enemy during the day also. Fighter protection will be requested in such cases.

1900 During the night of 17/18 June, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla with 4 cm. guns will again patrol in pairs off Cape Utrich to operate against any enemy forces proceeding to the southern Crimean coast or the Taman coast. The boats put out from Ivan Baba for the operation at 1900.

During the full moon period, 4 more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla will be at immediate readiness for action against possible enemy operations. Air reconnaissance has reported an enemy destroyer in the area off the central east coast again today.

According to this report, an enemy operation similar to the one on 20/21 May (see War Diary 21 May) is likely. If there are further pertinent reconnaissance reports in the course of the day, I plan to send the M.T.B.s at immediate readiness to lurking positions outside the harbor so that they can attack at once.

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401, "Grafenau" and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

An Army radio detachment provided by the command of combined operations assault boats was embarked in the leading boat of the harbor defense flotilla. This will ensure the desired radio contact between the Army and naval vessels on coastal defense.

I learned at a conference with Commander, E-boats that the non-contact mine with mooring rope (type LMF) can now be supplied with depth setting. This mine which can be laid by E-boats is very suitable for employment close to the Caucasus coast, where the water is too deep for ground mines. I therefore ordered that 60 LMF mines should be delivered.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of the above-mentioned attack on the "Gerasimus" convoy, no other air attacks were made on naval forces or convoys. Several planes flew over the Taganrog-Mariupol-Berdyansk area without dropping bombs. They were probably minelaying or minesweeping planes (see above).

About 20 incendiary bombs were dropped on the northern part of Novorossisk and there was the usual

artillery bombardment of the town and harbor sites.

Minesweeping Activity:

The FZ-Group, Sevastopol swept route Green with towed loop gear northwest of the approach buoy without result.

Kerch Strait: While acting as escort for the Genichesk-Temriuk convoy, mine-exploding vessel No. 192 swept the coastal route north of Kerch Strait twice for ground mines. Groups with skid gear and towed loop gear operated to widen the coastal route from Pavlovski to Takil. On 16 and 17 June, the harbor defense flotilla swept for moored mines on the new route to the harbor planned for fish-salting factory (west). No mines were swept.

Minesweeping planes swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait for ground mines.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 115 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1830 convoy No. 116 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges and anchored near Zhelezni Rog.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 35 put out from Kerch for Temriuk at 1800 with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 29, comprising 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, and 1 lighter, put in to Temriuk at 0900 and, after unloading, commenced return passage at 1500.

d. At 0730 the Mariupol-Taganrog supply convoy put in to Taganrog with 8 transport cutters and 2 boats of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Mariupol. At 1900 the convoy commenced return passage to Mariupol.

e. Crimea convoys (night traffic) and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. No large convoys ran because of the full moon.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

During the night, the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk repeatedly reported vessels proceeding between Gholenjik and the beachhead: at 2040 6 vessels, at 2230 4 vessels and 4 M.T.B.s, at 0320 9 vessels and at 0350 8 vessels. No observations were made during the day owing to fog.

Air reconnaissance results were incomplete as visibility was only moderate. Only slight traffic was observed off the Caucasus coast: at 0714 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 20 miles northwest of Sochi and at 0435 1 coastal vessel, course north, 25 miles west of Gholenjik.

Enemy shipping in port:

Gholenjik at 0720 (aerial photograph): 9 coastal vessels totaling 2,400 tons, 5 motor minesweepers, 16 M.T.B.s and about 50 small boats. Tuapse at 0425 (aerial photograph): 5 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, 1 motor minesweeper, 14 M.T.B.s, 8 of them putting in and 2 beached, and 20 small boats.
Sochi at 0400 (aerial photograph): 5 motor minesweepers, 3 M.T.B.s and 15 small boats.
Sukhum at 0500 (aerial photograph): 3 freighters of 1,500, 1,000 and 800 tons respectively, 2 coastal vessels, 2 motor minesweepers and 10 small boats.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Night air reconnaissance reconnoitered the Caucasus coast as far as Cape Pitsunda: at 2120 2 boats, course northwest, 22 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 2330 1 tug, 1 towed barge of 200 tons and 1 small armed vessel, course southeast, 12 miles south of Gholenjik. Although there was a moon, no further observations were made because of high fog.

Main Naval D/F Station did not intercept any activity of heavy surface forces. Submarines detected: 2 in the western Black Sea and 2 off the east coast. Lively activity of small vessels. Enemy air reconnaissance activity was especially lively in the Crimean coast area.

Own Situation:

On passage from Berdyansk to Mariupol, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweepers RA 51 and 56 encountered 3 enemy vessels east of Kossa Byelosaraika off Melekino. They had previously bombarded Melekino. The action lasted from 0020 until 0050. The naval gunnery lighters fired 200 8.8 cm. shells, while the enemy used 7.6 cm. guns. No damage aboard our vessels. Probably 1 enemy vessel was damaged since a picket of 16th Motorized Infantry Division reported that a direct hit on one vessel was observed from the shore. The enemy boats made off at a much higher speed than our boats had. The action was fought at a range of 1,500 - 4,000 meters. Our formation put in to Mariupol at 0350.

The enemy activity in the Sea of Azov shows that they are well aware of the operations of the naval gunnery lighters and, in future, we shall have to expect counter-attacks. This is confirmed by a report from 1st Air Corps according to which 10 heavy enemy coastal guns with crews and a large stock of ammunition were sent from Krasnodar to Primorsko Akhtari on 15 June. It is probable that all these 10 guns will not be allotted to Primorsko Akhtari but that at least 1 battery will be set up in Yeisk.

In any case, the transfer of these batteries to the coast proves that the bombardments of Primorsko Akhtari by the naval gunnery lighters had the expected success and caused the enemy to move artillery there from other places.

0430 "Grafenau", naval ferry barge F 401, 8 harbor defense boats and 6 assault boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. At 0115 naval ferry barge F 401 had a short engagement with an enemy boat which was bombarding the coast. The enemy returned the fire with 4.5 cm. guns and then made off to the north. Pursuit by F 401 was unsuccessful because the enemy boat was considerably faster. The type of the enemy boat was not identified.

0620 E-boats S 40, S 45, S 49 and S 52 put in to Ivan Baba. The enemy was not sighted in the patrol line off Cape Utrich.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: variable winds, force 1 - 3, sea wind on the coasts in the afternoon, force 4 - 5, fair to cloudless, visibility 12 - 15 miles, temperature at night 18° - 21° C.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to be at immediate readiness in Ivan Baba during the night of 18/19 June.

The 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla equipped with 4 cm. rapid-firing guns will again patrol north of the Kuban estuary during the coming night. The boats have orders to make use of their superior speed to destroy any enemy boats which appear.

1800 Submarine chaser "Xanten" and "Ship 19" put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine patrol in the Eupatoria-Cape Tarkhankutzki area. After carrying out their task, the vessels will put in to Ak Mechet.

2000 "Grafenau", naval ferry barge F 401 and 15 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty on both sides of the Kuban estuary.

1800 In accordance with the special orders of 16 June, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 put out from Mariupol for special operation "Yarmouth" (see Appendix to War Diary 16 June). On account of the weather (NW winds increasing to force 5), the operation had to be abandoned at 2340 and the boats put in to Mariupol again at 0350 on 19 June.

Enemy Air Activity:

No attacks on convoys or naval forces during the day. During the night of 18/19 June, planes repeatedly penetrated to the north coast of Taganrog Bay. From 0025 until daybreak, parachute flares were observed from Mariupol in a southwesterly direction. Between 2100 and 2205, 3 planes flew over Berdyansk, but dropped no bombs. After 2230 4 planes penetrated to Anapa, dropping 12 bombs. No damage.

Ivan Baba and Theodosia reported 5 planes at 0655. Altitude 4,000 meters. About 20 bombs were dropped off Theodosia harbor entrance. No losses or damage.

There was the usual artillery and mortar bombardment of the town and harbor of Novorossisk. During the evening and at night, 16 planes penetrated to Novorossisk, dropping about 35 bombs on the southern sector, the center of the town and the harbor area. No damage was reported. Addition to the report of 13 June: 1 enemy plane was shot down by Naval Port Commander's coastal batteries. On 14 June and again on 16 June, 1 man on Naval Port Commander's staff was wounded.

Minesweeping Activity:

Motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 checked route Brown from Sevastopol to Cape Takil with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant. No mines were swept. At 0400 the boats put in to Kerch.

3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla completed the operations to widen the western gap in the Ilichevka minefield. The closed area west of the minefield gap was searched for moored mines as far as the 10-meter line, but no mines were swept.

The FZ-Group, Genichesk was transferred to Berdyansk for minesweeping in Taganrog Bay.

Kerch Strait:

The group with skid gear swept the route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) four times for ground mines. No mines swept.

Minesweeping planes swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. No mines found.

The FZ-group found the wreck of lighter "Gerasimus" and marked the position with a buoy.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 116 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 117 put out from Kerch at 1815 with 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1645 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 35 put in to Kerch on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges. At 0800 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 29 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1115 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 30 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2035 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 5 vessels proceeding from the southeast to landing point 3, at 2130 10 vessels proceeding from landing point 3 to the southeast, at 2045 18 vessels unloading between landing points 3 and 6, at 2240 5 vessels proceeding from the south, at 2305 6 vessels proceeding from Ghelenjik to the beachhead and at 0520 5 vessels proceeding from the beachhead to the east.

Daylight air reconnaissance detected only slight traffic in the Caucasus coast area. At 0705 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, course northwest, was spotted 8 miles south of Ghelenjik and at 0848 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, were sighted near Cape Pitsunda.

The number of ships in Ghelenjik showed a decrease and, in spite of the incomplete sighting reports of the Air Force, it can be concluded that for the time being coastal traffic is heaviest off the central part of the east coast.
Ghelenjik at 0930 (aerial photograph): 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons, 3 motor minesweepers, 12 M.T.B.s, about 50 boats and 2 boats on minesweeping operations.
Tuapse at 0418 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 15 coastal vessels totaling 3,500 tons, 3 minesweepers, 5 motor minesweepers, 13 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel putting out, 1 floating crane and 25 boats.
Sochi at 0902: 1 small coastal vessel and 2 probable motor minesweepers.
Sukhum at 0833 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,500 tons with steam up, 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 freighter of 800 tons, 2 coastal vessels totaling 600 tons, 1 motor minesweeper, and 30 small boats.

There was no traffic in the Sea of Azov, including Taganrog Bay, and no incidents were reported.

Traffic identified from the air off the Turkish coast was again very lively. Altogether 18 vessels totaling about 26,000 tons were sighted, most of them on northerly courses.

Enemy reconnaissance activity in the Crimean area was again very lively.

Night air reconnaissance was flown along the Caucasus coast from Novorossisk to Tuapse: at 2250 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 1 minesweeper, course northwest, were sighted.

Main Naval D/F Station, Constantza reported no activity of heavy surface forces. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 5 in the western Black Sea and off the Crimean coast and 3 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

0200 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 46 and S 49 put in to Kerch from the patrol line in Temriuk Bay. The operation had to be discontinued because, with the strong SW winds and rough sea, weapons could no longer be used. The enemy was not sighted. The boats of the inner patrol line which were closer to the coast, namely "Grafenau", naval ferry barge F 401 and 17 boats, were able to remain in the operational area in the lee of the coast until 0430. They had nothing to report.

0200 Naval Liaison Staff, Rumania reported from Constantza that planes had again laid mines in the Danube Delta. Shipping on the Danube has been stopped until minesweeping planes check the route.

0350 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 put in to Mariupol (see War Diary 18 June).

0730 The convoy, proceeding from Yalta to Theodosia, comprising tanker "Dresden" and several lighters protected by naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 2 naval ferry barges, was attacked off Alushta at 0725 by 3 bombers. 16 bombs were dropped from an altitude of 1,000 meters. No damage or losses. One plane was probably shot down by the boats' accurate defensive fire.

At 0030 U 18 reported that she had attacked a Russian submarine in air grid square 5541. U 18 was ordered to remain near the place of submerging until 0600 and to search the area with hydrophones. As no further reports were received, she obviously obtained no results. When one submarine spots another, they are usually a match for each other. Our U-boat was at a disadvantage in that she approached with the setting moon behind her. Her speed was insufficient to gain a better position.

0900 Motor minesweepers R 197, R 196, R 37 and R 209 put out from Sulina to blast the wreck of "Le Progres" off the Sulina estuary. Due to unfavorable weather and rough sea, the wreck was

not found until 1430. Four depth charges had a certain effect on it, but there is still some wreckage left. When night set in, the operation had to be discontinued. Continuation is planned after the weather improves.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: N - NW winds, force 4 - 5, increasing and veering W - NW in the afternoon, fair, good visibility, temperature 18° - 20° C.

Sea of Azov: SW winds, force 4 - 5 during the day, veering NW and decreasing to force 2 - 3 in the evening; NW - N winds, force 5 after midnight.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to carry out the operation against Yeisk during the coming night. In spite of the unfavorable afternoon weather report for the Sea of Azov, I did not cancel this order as I expected that the N wind would not increase to force 5 until the operation had been carried out.

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 5 and 6 put out from Odessa today for Sevastopol.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the operation in Temriuk Bay on the night of 19/20 June as I believe that enemy motor gunboats will continue to appear and their high speed prevents the Temriuk defense vessels from engaging them.

1800 "Ship 19" and "Xanten" put out from Ak Mechet for anti-submarine operations in the Cape Tarkhankutzki-Eupatoria area. They proceeded with a towed convoy from Odessa.

1840 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 46 and S 49 put out from Kerch for operations. As on the last few days, the other boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla are at immediate readiness for action.

Enemy air activity was surprisingly slight. With the exception of an attack on the "Dresden" convoy, there were no raids.

2023 Anapa was bombarded for a short time from the sea, probably by vessels with salvo guns.

Novorossisk had no air attacks, but the usual artillery and mortar fire. A direct hit on Naval Port Commander's quarters Nos. 16 and 18 damaged the buildings and wounded 3 men.

Minesweeping Activity:

The FZ-group with towed loop gear and the group with skid gear each swept the coastal route in the southern part of Kerch Strait and the route to the new winter harbor of the fish-salting factory (west) twice. No mines were swept.

When minesweeping planes again found no ground mines on route Red, it was reopened to shipping north of Kerch Strait.

When boats checked for mines between Sevastopol and Cape Lukull, a Russian inertia contact mine, camouflaged by a wooden float, was detonated.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 117 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 118 put out from Kerch at 1820 with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 36 put out for Temriuk at 1820 with 1 tug, 1 lighter and 3 naval ferry barges. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 30 is on return passage to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. The 10th Theodosia-Taman convoy ran today close to the Crimean coast.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Between 0030 and 0130, Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 5 vessels unloading at landing point 3.

At 1046 daylight air reconnaissance identified 1 patrol boat off Tuapse and 2 small armed vessels 10 miles south of Tuapse. At 1240 a convoy consisting of 1 tanker of 2,000 tons, 1 minesweeper and 2 motor minesweepers, course northwest, was sighted 27 miles west of Sochi. A shadower reported the same convoy at 1730 10 miles southeast of Tuapse. At 1124 1 coastal vessel, course south, was sighted off Sukhum.

Enemy shipping the Caucasus ports:

Ghelenjik at 1325 (aerial photograph): 6 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 12 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel and about 70 small boats.
Tuapse at 1035 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,500 tons, 2 minesweepers, 3 motor minesweepers, 12 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel and 20 boats.
Sochi at 1259 (aerial photograph): 7 motor minesweepers, 1 M.T.B., 2 M.T.B.s putting in and 20 small boats.
Sukhum at 1119 (aerial photograph): 2 freighters of 1,800 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 20 boats.
Ochemchiri at 1130 (aerial photograph): in addition to the 2 submarine tenders, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons, 6 submarines, 5 motor minesweepers, 4 of them beached, 2 small armed vessels and 10 boats.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

16 medium freighters totaling about 35,000 tons were sighted in the course of the day off the Turkish coast.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria intercepted no large surface vessels. Relatively slight activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 2 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area.

Own Situation:

Yeisk was bombarded this morning by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3. The formation put out

from Mariupol at 1945 on 19 June as scheduled with motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 and was off Yeisk at daybreak. They opened fire at 0250 at a range of 4,500 meters. Well-aimed salvoes landed in the harbor area and in the town. Fires broke out in 2 places.

Two probable motor minesweepers which left the harbor were attacked at once. A direct hit was scored on one of the vessels and she stopped, listing badly.

The second vessel put up a smoke screen around the damaged vessel and the harbor. The bombardment was continued at a range of 6,000 meters until 0310. Total ammunition used by the 3 naval gunnery lighters amounted to 406 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells.

Enemy defenses were surprisingly strong. Two batteries, probably 15 cm. caliber, and 4 batteries, probably 8.8 cm. caliber, fired at the formation. The naval gunnery lighters returned the fire, but it was not seen whether hits were scored on the batteries. Even when withdrawing, the naval gunnery lighters were covered for three-quarters of an hour by the well-aimed fire of a heavy Russian battery. No hits were scored. On return passage, the boats were continually attacked by enemy planes. While the batteries were still shelling the formation, it was also bombed by 3 Rata planes. Later, 6 fighters made a low-level attack with well-aimed bombs and heavy machine-guns. Although our fighter protection was present as scheduled, several low-level attacks were made and the boats were machine-gunned. Motor minesweeper RA 56 shot down 1 enemy fighter which crashed into the water 60 meters from the boats on their port side. Three further planes were shot down by our own fighters, while the enemy claimed one of our planes. Casualties: 1 man seriously wounded and 1 slightly wounded. On return passage, 1 engine aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 1 and 1 engine aboard lighter No. 3 broke down. Both vessels were taken in tow by motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56, so that a speed of 7 knots could be maintained. At 0900 the formation put in to Mariupol.

The execution of this operation was difficult because of bad weather, especially the strong NE wind which increased in the morning. However, the boats kept to their schedule.

Daylight reconnaissance by 4th Air Force later reported that numerous hits had been scored in the harbor area and some buildings had been badly damaged.

0000 U 24 reported by short signal that she had encountered an enemy submarine 28 miles south-west of Sukhum. She had maintained contact and sent shadowing reports to U 19 which, however, was too far away to attack. At 0804 U 24 reported that she fired 1 torpedo which missed as the commander had underestimated the enemy speed. Contact was then lost. U 24 was ordered to advance to the coast again to expend her last torpedo and thereafter commence return passage.

The enemy vessel which had been sunk on 15 June by U 24 was later reported to be an escort vessel of the type mentioned in "Weyer 1941/42" (page 374).

U 18 was ordered by radiogram to attack the tanker convoy reported by the Air Force, but she was unable to reach it. The Air Force had also planned to attack this tanker convoy, but they canceled the operation when it was learned that the tanker was not a 7,000-ton vessel but only a 2,000-ton ship.

0430 The vessels on coastal defense duty put in to Temriuk. They had nothing to report.

0510 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 46 and S 49 put in to Kerch from the outer patrol line north of the Kuban estuary. They also failed to sight the enemy.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: E - NE winds, force 4, locally 5, fair to cloudy, visibility 10 - 15 miles.

Sea of Azov: N winds, force 5, increasing at times to force 6.

1035 At 1035 near Cape Chauda, the convoy proceeding from Theodosia to Taman, consisting of 4 naval ferry barges, 2 towing vessels and 1 lighter, was attacked without success by a submarine. A torpedo fired at long range passed astern of the leading vessel, naval ferry barge F 313. Naval ferry barges F 313 and F 307 dropped 5 depth charges but they did not seem to be effective.

As on the last few days, 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to be at immediate readiness during the night of 20/21 June.

The group in Kerch was transferred to Ivan Baba, but did not operate because some of their engines had to be repaired.

2000 Temriuk reported that the boats had not put out on coastal defense duty on account of the weather. The boats are ready for action in port.

Minesweeping Activity:

While minesweeping between Sevastopol and Cape Khersonese, Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol cut 4 inertia contact mines near Brown 1. They were new mines. Route Brown was closed from Sevastopol to Balaklava. Minesweeping will be continued by the harbor defense flotilla on 21 June. The Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to transfer from Kerch to Sevastopol to sweep the route.

Minesweeping in Kerch Strait was hampered by the weather.

An FZ-group checked the fairway from Berdyansk to Mariupol without result.

A ground mine was swept in the River Bug near Nikolaiev by a minesweeping plane.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 118 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. No. 119 put out from Kerch at 1730 with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 36 ran as scheduled with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, and 1 lighter.

At 1200 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 31 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. No steamer convoys ran because of the full moon.

Transportation figures for 11 - 20 June 1943:

1. Kerch Strait (tonnage carried by the Navy in brackets):

18,962 tons	(7,029)	supplies
2,149	(8)	motor vehicles
3,105	(262)	other vehicles

225		(4) guns
112	tons	(16) field mail
38,055		(1,780) soldiers and civilians
8,303		(537) horses
		(993) head of cattle.

2. Kerch-Anapa (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges):

4,556 tons supplies.

3. Kerch-Temriuk (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):

4,090 tons supplies.

4. Theodosia-Taman (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):

803 tons supplies.

5. Genichesk-Temriuk (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):

4,425 tons supplies.

Total: 32,948 tons

Navy's share: 20,919 tons.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that the enemy had laid a heavy smoke screen over the eastern and southern sectors and Kabardinka Bay during the night. It was therefore impossible to observe any traffic to the beachhead.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum: at 0800 1 coastal vessel of 400 tons, putting out, off Ghelenjik; at 0754 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, 20 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0715 1 minesweeper, course southeast, and 2 small coastal vessels on alternating courses 6 miles south of Cape Pitsunda; at 0610 1 patrol boat, stopped, 25 miles northwest of Batum.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0808 (aerial photograph): 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 13 M.T.B.s, 3 small armed vessels and about 70 boats.
Tuapse at 0750 (aerial photograph): 1 tanker of 2,000 tons, 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,600 tons, 3 minesweepers, 5 motor minesweepers, 11 M.T.B.s, 2 of them beached, 2 small armed vessels and 25 boats. At 0840 the Air Force reported 3 tankers, each 2,000 tons, at the oil pier in Tuapse.
Sochi at 0725 (aerial photograph): 6 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s and 15 small boats.
Sukhum at 0705 (aerial photograph): 2 freighters of 1,000 and 800 tons respectively, 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, and about 20 boats.

No enemy shipping traffic was observed in the Sea of Azov.
Primorsko Akhtari at 0725 (aerial photograph): 6 small armed vessels, probably motor minesweepers, and 70 boats.

Today only 1 medium freighter, course west, was observed off the Turkish coast 27 miles west of Kerempeh Burnu.

Night reconnaissance was flown as far as Tuapse. No locations were obtained.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no large surface vessels. Off the Caucasus coast and in the Sea of Azov, there was slight activity

of small vessels. Submarines detected: 3 in the western Black Sea and the Crimean coast area and 1 off the east coast.

No special operations on the Army front at the Gotenkopf bridgehead. Heavy supply traffic continued off the coastal frontline of 44th Army Corps and along the Kuban to the west. Renewed enemy attacks are to be expected within the next few days.

Own Situation:

Shortly before midnight, Temriuk was bombarded from the sea by medium-caliber guns. Simultaneously, 5 or 6 bombs were dropped on the outer harbor at Temriuk. Slight damage was caused to vessels lying there. Casualties: 1 man slightly wounded.

At 2347 immediately after the bombardment started, naval ferry barge F 401 which had been lying in the harbor put out and returned the fire. The enemy ceased fire at 0000 and made off to the north with F 401 in pursuit. At 0045 the enemy boat was visible for a short time, but no hits were observed. At 0145 F 401 abandoned the pursuit.

Owing to the weather (N winds, force 5 - 6), the patrol line off the Kuban estuary was not occupied last night. However, since the enemy was able to bombard Temriuk, at least naval ferry barge F 401 and "Grafenau" might have put out. Taking this case as an example, I pointed out to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus how important it is to occupy the patrol lines and directed him always to make a careful examination of the weather forecast before canceling operations.

To reinforce the patrol line, I have temporarily subordinated naval gunnery lighter No. 4 to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus. She will be transferred to Temriuk with the next supply convoy.

0630 Motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 put out from Kerch for Sevastopol for minesweeping duty (new enemy minefield with inertia contact mines near Brown 1, see War Diary 20 June). The boats have orders to check route Brown with oropesa gear from Cape Takil to Sevastopol.

0806 Naval ferry barges F 304 and F 301, which were at sea to act as additional convoy escorts, reported an enemy submarine 17 miles southeast of Cape Tarkhankutzki. On receipt of this report, "Ship 19" put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations. Fighter protection was also detailed and the pilots were brought to cockpit readiness.

0900 While on passage from Theodosia to Yalta, naval ferry barges F 307 and F 360 sighted an enemy submarine at periscope depth off Alushta. The submarine tried to gain a forward position to attack and the depth charges dropped by both naval ferry barges did not seem to be successful.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: N - NE winds, force 4 - 5, throughout the day force 6 locally, fair to cloudy, light thunderstorms, visibility 15 miles, temperature at night 18° - 22° C.

Today, I subordinated naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine for operations, stipulating that the boats might always be recalled at short notice for any offensive tasks which have priority over all defensive assignments. I also sent the following list of operational tasks to be carried out by the naval gunnery lighters:

a. Escorting of Mariupol-Taganrog supply convoys.

b. Defense of Taganrog Bay at night against enemy bombardment from the sea and against any landings. In such operations, their main task is the destruction of enemy naval forces.

c. Harbor protection during surprise enemy attacks when the boats are not at sea. In such cases, the naval gunnery lighters will put out as quickly as possible to attack the enemy forces.

In spite of these measures, I still consider that the main task of the naval gunnery lighters is offensive operations against enemy naval forces. Such operations may, of course, develop at short notice during their escort and coastal defense assignments.

Motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56, which took part in the operation against Yeisk on 19/20 June, were ordered to return to Kerch, sweeping the Mariupol-Berdyansk route with oropesa gear on passage.

As on the last few days, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to be at immediate readiness during the night of 21/22 June. The other boats will not operate because of the weather.

1600 U 18 reported from the operational area that she had not operated against the tanker convoy proceeding to Tuapse. The boat had been

operating submerged against the coast during the day and did not receive the radiogram order until she surfaced at night. With the exception of 1 coastal vessel, she had not sighted any enemy traffic between Tuapse and Ghelenjik.

Since the Air Force had this morning reported 3 2,000-ton tankers in Tuapse, there must have been further unobserved traffic from the south to Tuapse either yesterday or during the night. As this traffic was expected to return, U 18 which was operating between Ghelenjik and Tuapse was ordered to transfer at once to the Tuapse-Uchdere operational area.

U 20 was ordered to put out on 22 June via the northern route. She was first to proceed to an attack area north of Tuapse for a short harassing action.

The new radar sets have been installed at Anapa and Cape Takil. The one at Cape Takil was working on 18 June and the one in Anapa started operating today. The Air Force was informed of the 2 new stations which are primarily to protect Anapa convoys from low-level air attacks. The prompt alerting of the fighters stationed in Anapa in the event of approaching enemy planes has been assured by the establishment of a direct telephone line to the air base.

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401 put out from Temriuk for patrol duty. The smaller vessels did not put out on account of the weather.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on convoys or naval forces today. Between 0030 and 0037, 6 bombs were dropped on the town area of Berdyansk. No damage was reported. Taman and Senaya were also bombed: they too reported no damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Harbor defense boats cut 3 more inertia contact mines in the new enemy minefield off Sevastopol. Up to now, seven of these mines have been found. The FZ-Group, Genichesk swept the area between Berdyansk and Mariupol without result. Group Berdyansk of Coastal Defense Flotilla, Sea of Azov, comprising 4 boats, also took part in this operation. 2.8 miles south of Berdyansk, harbor defense vessel RB 05 sank after being swamped by the heavy sea in an eastnortheasterly gale with wind force 6 - 7. Salvage does not seem likely.

Kerch Strait:

The group with skid gear and Harbor Defense Flotilla, Kerch swept the new route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) without result. The new route in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait was checked three times by mine-sweeping planes. No mines were swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 119 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. At 1735 convoy No. 120 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 31 put in to Temriuk at 0815 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1410 after unloading, 4 naval ferry barges commenced return passage to Genichesk.

The Kerch-Temriuk convoy did not run because of the weather.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. No steamer convoys ran because of the full moon.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

No reports have been received from Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on enemy traffic to the beachhead.

Daylight air reconnaissance was very difficult because of the bad weather and only a part of the Caucasus coast could be reconnoitered. At 1452 1 freighter of 800 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 small armed vessel, course northwest, were observed 7 miles west of Adler. At 1418 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 2 patrol vessels, course south, were sighted 10 miles south of Ochemchiri and at 1323 1 M.T.B. put out from Adler.

As far as could be seen, the number of ships in port had not changed much.

One tanker of 2,000 tons and 1 freighter are still in Tuapse.

There was no night reconnaissance because of the weather.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no activity of surface forces. Activity of small vessels in the east coast area was normal, but more traffic was intercepted in the Sea of Azov than on the previous days. Submarines detected: 3 in the western Black Sea including the southern Crimean area and 1 in an unidentified position in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

The night of 21/22 June passed quietly without any operations by our offensive forces.

0430 Naval ferry barge F 401 put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Owing to the weather, the boat had slight damage (cracks in her welded seams). However, according to a report from Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, she is still fully operational. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to send a further naval ferry barge out on patrol duty off the Kuban estuary until naval gunnery lighter No. 4 arrived in Temriuk.

CONFIDENTIAL

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: NE winds, force 5, slowly abating, cloudy to overcast, thunderstorms over a wide area, clearing up in the afternoon, visibility 7 - 10 miles, temperature at night 18° - 20° C.

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 were today reported ready for action. I ordered that the 2 boats should be transferred to Sevastopol with the next suitable convoy. Until then, they are to train in Constantza. After arrival in Sevastopol, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 will train up to and including 3 July. During this time they will be subordinated for administration to 1st Landing Craft Flotilla.

Recently, it has repeatedly been necessary to close the Danube to shipping because of suspected minelaying. On two of these occasions, I arranged the transfer of minesweeping planes from Kerch to Galatz. However, this reduction in the few remote minesweeping forces available for Kerch Strait cannot be borne for long. I therefore pointed out to Naval Liaison Staff, Rumania that they would have to procure suitable remote minesweeping forces for those tasks in the Danube area for which they are responsible.

1330 U 20 put out from Constantza via the northern route for her first operation against the enemy.

At 1332 U 19 reported from the operational area that she had pursued a steamer of about 4,000 tons, which was proceeding from Trabzon to Poti escorted by 3 minesweepers. Because of the strong air patrol and U 19's slower speed, she was unable to attack the convoy before it put in to Poti.

A later report from the German Consul in Istanbul showed that the steamer was probably "Anatoli Serov" (2,922 G.R.T.) which had been ready to put out from Trabzon on 21 June. I have arranged that, in future, reports from the Consul concerning shipping traffic off the Turkish coast should at once be transmitted direct to Admiral, Black Sea.

I have not ordered any offensive operations for 1st E-Boat Flotilla in Ivan Baba tonight, because, in my opinion, prospects during the present uncertain weather with the unfavorable moon phase do not justify the consumption of fuel and the operational hours of the crew. After the weather improves, I plan to assemble all operational boats of 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas for a joint offensive operation.

At 2230 the convoy proceeding from Taman to Theodosia, comprising "Orion", "Wagrein" and naval ferry barges F 312 and F 471, reported that a submarine had made an attack 10 miles southeast of Cape Chauda. Two torpedoes were fired, but both missed. Depth charges from both naval ferry barges brought no success in the ensuing submarine chase.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on naval forces or convoys. Mariupol and Berdyansk reported isolated penetrations with only a few bombs which caused no damage.

From 0425 until 0455, Taganrog was bombarded from the direction of Primorka and Sambek. Our own guns opened up and silenced the enemy batteries.

Novorossisk reported the usual artillery and anti-tank bombardment of harbor sites and the center of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

The planned sweeping of the Rumanian minefields off Sulina by motor minesweepers R 37, R 196, R 197 and R 209 had to be discontinued on account of the weather. At 1645 the motor minesweepers put in to Constantza. I have temporarily subordinated Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla to Commander, Escorts and Convoys, Black Sea for the execution of this minesweeping task.

Two more inertia contact mines were cut off Sevastopol when sweeping the new anti-submarine minefield near Brown 1. Minesweeping near Brown 1 is to be continued. On 23 June, motor minesweepers R 163 and R 166 will be at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast as anti-mine escorts between Sevastopol and Yalta.

The FZ-group swept route Green six times north of the approach buoy at Sevastopol. No mines were swept.

Kerch Strait:

The harbor defense flotilla swept the new route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) for moored mines without result.

The group with skid gear had to discontinue minesweeping on account of the weather. For the same reason, minesweeping planes did not operate.

The FZ-Group, Genichesk carried out minesweeping tasks off Mariupol harbor entrance as ordered. No mines were swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was badly impeded by the weather.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 120 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 37 put out for Temriuk at 1900 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters. It had been delayed by the weather.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 32 put out from Genichesk at 1130 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. (For the submarine attack on the Taman-Theodosia convoy, see above.)

CONFIDENTIAL

23 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1500 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 2 patrol vessels, 2 minesweepers, 4 tugs, 8 lighters and 2 unidentified vessels putting out from Ghelenjik. The vessels assembled south of Ghelenjik and were probably destined for the beachhead.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Sukhum, but because of the weather the area between Ochemchiri and Batum could not be reconnoitered. At 0455 2 freighters and 2 patrol vessels, course southeast, were observed 8 miles west of Gagri; at 0546 1 merchant ship of 1,000 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 patrol vessel, course southeast, 15 miles west of Ochemchiri; at 0529 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, off Poti; at 1009 1 towed convoy totaling about 1,000 tons and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 11 miles southeast of Tuapse; at 1018 1 M.T.B., course southeast, 5 miles west of Sochi; at 1023 2 coastal vessels totaling 200 tons, stopped, off Adler; at 1043 1 motor minesweeper, stopped, 7 miles south of Sukhum; at 1052 1 motor minesweeper, course west, 15 miles west of Ochemchiri; at 1128 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, course southeast, 17 miles south of Gagri.

Nothing to report on vessels in the Caucasus ports.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

There was no night reconnaissance because of the weather.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria located increasing activity of small vessels in the east coast area, but no heavy enemy surface forces. Submarines detected: 2 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area and 2 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

While "Ship 19" operated against submarines in the Cape Tarkhankutzki-Eupatoria area during the night without locating any, the convoy of lighters and naval ferry barges which was proceeding from Taman to Theodosia was attacked by a submarine at 2230 off Cape Chauda. Two torpedoes were observed, but both missed. Depth charges dropped by the naval ferry barges were not seen to have any success.

At 0645 the convoy put in to Theodosia.

The patrol line northeast of the Kuban estuary was not occupied during the night on account of the weather. The boats which had put out from Temriuk at 2000 had to put in again at 2130.

0530 Kerch reported that motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56, which had taken part in the 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla operation against Yeisk, put in to Pavlovski harbor from Mariupol at 0530.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: N - NW winds, force 3 - 4, fair, visibility above 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: N - NW winds, force 4 - 5, throughout the day force 5 - 6 in Kerch Strait, varying cloud, showers, visibility 10 - 12 miles, temperature at night 18° - 20° C.

Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea informed me that it was planned to transfer a German fighter Staffel to Eupatoria for the protection of the imminent steamer convoys. Execution of this measure was, however, dependent on the land and air situation at the Kuban front. After the failure of the Rumanian fighters in the case of the "Birgit" convoy, we must have protection by German fighters. I therefore told 1st Air Corps and Army Group A that, in addition to being stopped during the full moon period, steamer convoys would have to be canceled altogether, if fighter protection could not be promised. The disadvantageous consequences for the Army supplies to the Crimea would have to be accepted.

Owing to the full moon, it had recently only been possible to carry out small-scale operations against enemy supply traffic close to the Caucasus coast. Now, when the period of darkness is longer, I plan to put up as strong a front as possible by simultaneous surprise attacks in different places. There are already 3 submarines off the south Caucasus coast. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was therefore ordered to operate in 2 groups on the night of 23/24 June, one against enemy supply traffic off the Caucasus coast and the other against the beachhead. The first group of 4 boats with 4 cm. guns will bombard and, if possible, torpedo the Myshako landing stages and attack supply transports and, if feasible, also patrol forces. They will approach via the coastal route and commence return passage at 2400 at the latest over the open sea route. The second group of 3 boats will occupy lurking positions between Cape

Idokopas and Cape Olginskaya for operations against enemy traffic between Tuapse and Ghelenjik. Approach and return passage via the coastal route and Anapa.

All operational boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to occupy the patrol line west of Cape Utrich.

1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas have been informed of the operational orders for both flotillas. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus will inform the coastal authorities and the naval ferry barges of the Anapa convoy at sea of the intensified operations by our formations.

1512 U 18 sighted a convoy consisting of 2 steamers, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 escort vessel 20 miles southeast of Tuapse. The vessels were on a southeasterly course at moderate speed. At 1538 a steamer of 1,000 tons was torpedoed. The effect of the torpedo could not be observed owing to the strong defenses. The escort vessel was attacked at 2034, but the torpedo missed. U 18 continued to pursue the convoy without success.

A suitable position has been found for the new 15 cm. naval battery to be set up in Anapa. The spot was chosen after thorough examination as to the most appropriate of 3 positions for the battery. It will be on the dominant Hill 104 about 7 km. north of Anapa. The necessary orders have been given to develop the site for operational use.

2000 Two naval ferry barges and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

2015 The boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Theodosia again with engine trouble.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 1016 Yalta was attacked by 5 bombers which dropped about 30 bombs. Buildings of Naval Port Commander and some houses in the town area were damaged. No casualties among naval personnel.

A few planes flew over Mariupol and Berdyansk during the night, but they dropped no bombs and their machine-gunning was ineffective.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping planes employed today in the Danube Delta have not yet swept any mines.

Sevastopol: The enemy anti-submarine minefield near Brown 1 was again checked with oropesa gear, 20-meter pendant. No further mines were swept. The harbor defense flotilla exploded an inertia contact mine which was camouflaged by a wooden float. The FZ-Group, Sevastopol with towed loop gear checked route Green-north of the approach buoy at Sevastopol without result.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear and the harbor defense group swept the route to the new fish-salting factory winter harbor (west). One mine was swept. Minesweeping planes checked the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

The FZ-Group, Genichesk completed the mine-sweeping operations off Mariupol.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 121 ran with 6 naval ferry barges.

Convoy No. 122 put out from Kerch at 1815 with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1930 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 37 put in to Kerch on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

Convoy No. 38 put out for Temriuk at 1930 with 1 tug, 2 lighters, 1 naval ferry barge and naval gunnery lighter No. 4.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 32 is on return passage to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 lighter and 1 freight towing vessel.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. (For submarine attack on the Theodosia-Taman convoy, see above.)

CONFIDENTIAL

24 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported that 1 tug, 5 lighters and 2 M.T.B.s had put out from Ghelenjik between 1915 and 1940.

Convoy traffic off the Caucasus coast, especially in the central area between Tuapse and Sukhum, was considerably livelier than on the previous days. At 0437 daylight air reconnaissance sighted 1 towed convoy totaling 600 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 10 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0455 1 convoy of 2 freighters and 3 escort vessels, course southeast, 5 miles west of Gagri; at 0529 1 patrol boat 7 miles northwest of Poti and 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, moderate speed, 5 miles north of Poti; at 0546 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 2 escort vessels, course southeast, 15 miles west of Ochemchiri; at 0645 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, course northwest, 8 miles southwest of Tuapse; at 1537 1 surfaced submarine 65 miles southwest of Adler.

Nothing to report on shipping in the ports.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Shipping traffic off the Turkish coast was slight.

Night reconnaissance was flown over the Caucasus coast from Novorossisk to Cape Pitsunda without incident.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no movements of heavy surface forces, but lively traffic of small vessels off the east coast. Altogether 8 submarines were intercepted at sea: 5 in the western Black Sea and off the Crimean coast and the other 3 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

At 2247, 2330 and 0130, the convoy of 2 naval ferry barges with 1 tug and 1 lighter, which was proceeding from Theodosia to Taman, was attacked by submarines between Cape Chauda and Cape Opuk. Eight torpedoes were fired in all. Probably 2 attacks were made by the same submarine which had hauled ahead. All the torpedoes missed our vessels. The naval ferry barges dropped 12 depth charges, but no success was observed. The

attack may have been carried out by enemy M.T.B.s, which the convoy commander did not observe. (Early on the next day radio monitoring intercepted M.T.B.s making off.)

0300 After sweeping the Mariupol-Berdyansk area, FZ 23, FZ 28 and motor minesweeper FR 7 commenced return passage to Genichesk.

0400 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 45 and S 46 put in to Ivan Baba from their operation in the Cape Myshako area. No enemy supply traffic or unloading at the landing points was observed. At 2345 the E-boats had a short engagement with 2 submarine chasers which withdrew at once under cover of the coastal batteries which interfered on their behalf. No hits were observed on enemy vessels and none of our boats was damaged. The second group consisting of S 28, S 49 and S 47 was in a lurking position off the coast between Gholenjik and Tuapse. They observed no enemy traffic. No casualties during a short bombardment by a coastal battery. The boats put in to Ivan Baba at 0615.

0430 Nothing to report from the patrol line off the Kuban estuary. No air activity was observed at sea. Harbor defense vessel RK 04 was towed in to Temriuk at 0430 with engine trouble.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: N winds, force 2 - 3, fair, visibility above 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: N - NW winds, force 4, fair, cloudy in the east, visibility 12 - 15 miles, temperature at night 17° - 19° C.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat last night's operation against enemy supply traffic between Cape Idokopas and Cape Olginskaya on the night of 24/25 June.

The additional escort tasks between Constantza and the Bosporus, caused by the increasing supply traffic between Constantza and the Aegean Sea, cannot be carried out without more motor minesweepers. Considering the increasing submarine and air activity and the frequent enemy mine-laying operations (e.g. Sevastopol), the motor minesweepers available are not even adequate for the present escort tasks. Today I again called Group Command's attention to the urgency of my proposal of 8 June 1943 for the formation of 2 motor minesweeper flotillas, each comprising 12 boats.

We have still not been able to establish the whereabouts of the steamer which U 18 torpedoed on 23 June. At 0455 air reconnaissance sighted a convoy of 2 small freighters 5 miles west of Gagri and at 0529 another convoy consisting of a freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 escort vessel between Ochemchiri and Poti, both course southeast. According to dead reckoning, either convoy might be the one which had been attacked by U 18. In the first case, the convoy would have sailed at a speed of 4.3 knots, allowing the torpedoed steamer to proceed at slow speed or in tow. In the latter case, the torpedoed steamer must have sunk and the remaining convoy would then have proceeded at 7.8 knots. At 0812 U 18 contacted the first convoy again and reported the position to U 24. However, either U 24 did not receive the radiogram or defenses prevented her from gaining an attacking position before the convoy put in to port. U 18 was also unable to take the offensive, probably on account of the strong air patrol. At the end of the pursuit, both submarines were ordered to new operational areas: U 24, which is almost due to return, to the Sukhum-Ochemchiri area near the coast and U 18 as a relief for U 24 in the Gagri-Sukhum area.

Today I reported to Group Command the following operational plans for the Italian midget submarines after the transfer of their base to Sevastopol:

1. Offensive operations against enemy submarines with focal points in the well-known attack areas or in areas allocated according to sighting reports and D/F bearings. Ports of departure: Sevastopol, Yalta and Theodosia.

2. On moonlit nights, operations in patrol line against enemy destroyer operations off our supply ports (Theodosia and Anapa).

3. Offensive operations against enemy supplies would not even be possible from Anapa because the boats' range is too small to allow a worthwhile stay in the operational area. Only an operational period of 48 hours at a cruising speed of 5 knots can be accepted to meet the safety regulations, thus the passage to and from the operational area must not exceed 75 miles to allow the boats to remain there for an adequate period. Enemy air patrol and lack of German fighters make it impossible to tow the midget submarines by means of motor minesweepers or submarines which would be unable to submerge. Further offensive employment will be discussed in due time if the war situation or the political situation (Bosporus) should change.

1500 Genichesk reported that harbor defense boat RG 56 had burnt out after her engine exploded during a check sweep. She was beached and the crew was rescued. Two men were slightly wounded.

While marking the spot where naval ferry barge F 371 had sunk, motor fishing vessel No. 4009 of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Kerch hit the wreck and had to be beached as she sprang a leak. Salvage will probably be possible.

1900 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 put out from Constantza with a naval ferry barge convoy to proceed direct to Sevastopol.

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401, naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 15 boats put out from Temriuk at 2000 on coastal defense duty. The deputy Naval Port Commander, Temriuk embarked on F 401 as ordered.

Enemy Air Activity:

A few enemy planes dropped bombs on Berdyansk and Taganrog. No damage was reported, but one man was slightly wounded in Berdyansk.

Novorossisk reported an air raid during the night in which 16 bombs were dropped on the southern sector. No damage was reported.

Usual artillery and anti-tank bombardment of the site at the east harbor and the northern part of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

After minesweeping at Brown 1, route Brown was reopened from Sevastopol to Balaklava.

The FZ-Group, Sevastopol, using towed loop gear, swept 1 mine on route Green north of the approach buoy.

After motor minesweepers (FR) had laid a line of buoys, minesweeping planes today began operations in the Danube Delta as scheduled.

Kerch Strait:

Two mines were cut by the group with towed loop gear on the route to the new fish-salting factory winter harbor (west). From their explosion columns, they were thought to be German aerial mines.

Minesweeping planes carried out minesweeping to widen the route in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 122 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges.

Convoy No. 123 put out from Kerch at 1810 with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1950 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 38 put in to Kerch on return passage with 2 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 33 is on passage to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges and 1 tug.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. As the full moon period is over, steamer convoys ran again today.

CONFIDENTIAL

25 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0930 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed a vessel proceeding from the beachhead to Ghelenjik.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Ochemchiri. At 0538 they took an aerial photograph which showed 1 tanker of 7,000 tons escorted by 1 torpedoboat, 3 minesweepers, 4 motor minesweepers and 3 M.T.B.s 24 miles south of Tuapse. Five fighters provided air escort. The convoy was proceeding to Tuapse. At 0619 1 coastal vessel, course northwest, was sighted off Tuapse; at 0710 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, off Sukhum; at 0712 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, west of Ochemchiri; at 1350 1 minesweeper off Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:

Oil pier at Tuapse at 1315: the 7,000-ton tanker was photographed from the air. Apart from this tanker, there were surprisingly many vessels in Tuapse: 1 freighter of 800 tons, 12 coastal vessels totaling about 5,200 tons, the escort vessels of the tanker convoy, 3 motor minesweepers and 2 M.T.B.s.
Ghelenjik at 1434 (aerial photograph): 5 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 18 M.T.B.s, 2 small armed vessels, 1 towed convoy of about 500 tons putting out, and about 70 boats.
Sochi at 0605 (aerial photograph): 1 motor minesweeper and about 15 boats.
Gudauty at 0720 (aerial photograph): only small boats.
Sukhum at 0710 (aerial photograph): 3 freighters of 1,500 tons, 1,000 and 800 tons respectively, 2 coastal vessels of 600 tons, and 15 boats.
In the evening at dusk, Tuapse was successfully attacked by 7 Ju 88 and 3 He 111. After bomb hits, a large fire broke out in the oil dump on the pier and it could be seen even at a distance of 150 km. It is not known whether the tanker was hit or not.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

No reports on traffic off the Turkish coast.

At 0100 night reconnaissance located 1 vessel off Adler.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria located no activity of surface forces. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 5 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area and 3 off the east coast.

Own Situation:

0354 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 15 boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. They had nothing to report.

0630 E-boats S 28, S 40 and S 49 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. They encountered no supply traffic or patrol activity in the operation area between Cape Idokopas and Cape Olginskaya. At 0235 on return passage, the boats had a short engagement with 2 enemy M.T.B. formations, each comprising 6 boats, which were returning from the Crimean coast on a southeasterly course. After S 28 had fired a few rounds, she had a barrel premature in her 2 cm. gun, while S 49's 4 cm. gun broke down temporarily. The enemy did not open fire.

0818 Shortly before putting in to Anapa, Anapa convoy No. 123 was approached by 12 enemy bombers and 1 flying boat protected by 6 fighters. However, they were driven off before they could attack and our fighters shot down 6 enemy planes (5 bombers and 1 fighter).

The quick and efficient participation by our fighters was made possible by location reports from the aircraft reporting station which was set up a few days ago (see War Diary 20 June).

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: S - SW winds, force 3, afterwards veering W - NW and increasing to force 4 - 5, fair, thunderstorms in the afternoon, visibility 10 - 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: light variable winds, later freshening and in the evening veering W - NW, force 4, fair, tendency to thunderstorms, visibility above 15 miles, temperature at night approximately 20° C.

In view of the repeated sorties against the Temriuk coast by enemy motor minesweepers stationed in Akhtari, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to occupy patrol lines between Temriuk and Akhtari from 45° 30' N, 37° 25' E to approximately 46° 0' N, 37° 30' E on the night of 25/26 June. The boats put out

from Ivan Baba at 1630 to be north of Kerch Strait at 2000. 1st E-Boat Flotilla has been informed that coastal defense vessels from Temriuk are occupying the inner patrol line. Coastal authorities have been informed by Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus.

At my suggestion, the fuel quota for the combined operations ferries engaged in the Kerch Strait ferry traffic, which had been reduced from 22 cbm. to 8 cbm. per day, has again been raised to 15 cbm. Since 18 cbm. are required for the 21 ferries which run each day, this concession will still not enable full exploitation of the available combined operations ferries.

U 24 reported from the operational area that she was commencing return passage owing to lack of fuel. The boat was ordered, when returning, to observe and report from off Tuapse whether the convoy with the 7,000-ton tanker had sailed. The other U-boats in the operational area were ordered by radio to operate against the tanker convoy.

U 24 also observed the effect of the air raid on Tuapse and reported large fires there.

Two operational submarines of the Italian midget submarine flotilla were ordered to operate against enemy submarines in the exercise area east of Constantza from 27 to 29 June.

Torpedo attacks by our own U-boats and E-boats on coastal vessels and other small vessels have always been unsuccessful as a result of the inadequate depth setting of the torpedoes. I have therefore reported to Group Command that the special conditions in the Black Sea area make it vital to produce a torpedo which, with minimum depth setting of 0.5 to 1 meter, keeps to its course or runs as a surface-runner on a perfectly straight course at a constant speed. I also asked Group to forward my request at once to the Torpedo Inspectorate.

1740 E-boat S 41 put out from Constantza for Ivan Baba.

1935 Anapa convoy No. 123, which was returning from Anapa, was attacked by 5 enemy bombers near Cape Takil. The attack was made from an altitude of 2,500 meters, so that the vessels' anti-aircraft guns could not be used. A direct hit scored on naval ferry barge F 142 set fire to the cargo of old uniforms. The boat was towed into Kerch and the fire was extinguished in the course of the evening. Her engines were not damaged. Losses: 4 men killed (3 of the crew and 1 sailor on leave),

3 men severely wounded (1 of the crew, 1 soldier and 1 airman) and 5 men slightly wounded (3 of the crew, 1 soldier and 1 airman).

Apart from this attack, enemy air activity was slight. At 0130 1 plane attacked Theodosia: 6 - 8 bombs were dropped on the town area, but the Navy suffered no losses or damage.

At 0115 25 bombs were dropped on the harbor and town area of Berdyansk. Some buildings were damaged.

Novorossisk reported artillery bombardment by guns of all calibers on the northern part of the town, the center of the town and the southern sector. A few planes flew over the town, dropping 2 bombs without causing any damage.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Minesweeping Activity:

The increase in enemy minelaying made it necessary to employ all available minesweeping forces. After the anti-mine escort of the steamers "Varna" and "Prodromos" had cut a mine off Cape Lukull at 0946, the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was immediately sent out from Sevastopol to join the motor minesweepers of the steamer convoy in minesweeping operations. In the course of the day, a total of 10 inertia contact mines was cut. Sweeping will be continued on 26 June.

Kerch Strait:

One mine was swept by mine-exploding vessel No. 192 on the route to the new winter harbor south of the west corner of Kossa Tuszla. Another mine was exploded by minesweeping planes in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait near Red 15. The FZ-group and the group with skid gear swept the route to the winter harbor six times without result.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 123 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. For the 2 air attacks on this convoy, see above.

Convoy No. 124 put out from Kerch at 1810 with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 39 put out from Kerch at 1945 with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 33 is on return passage to Genichesk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

26 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2021 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 9 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik and at 0415 1 M.T.B. making for Cape Doob from the heachhead. Further observation was prevented by fog.

Daylight air reconnaissance detected slight coastal traffic only. During the day, motor minesweepers and minesweepers were sighted south of Tuapse in rendezvous position for the tanker convoy. At 1620 the 7,000-ton tanker and 10 escort vessels were sighted putting out from Tuapse on a southerly course at a speed of approximately 7.5 knots. One of our planes shadowed the convoy until 2335 and continuously reported its position.

With the exception of Tuapse, enemy shipping in the ports was essentially unchanged.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Two medium freighters on a westerly course were sighted off the Turkish coast west of Sinope, while 2 freighters and 1 passenger ship of 2,500 tons, course east, were detected northwest of Trabzon.

In addition to the tanker convoy, night reconnaissance detected a small vessel 20 miles southeast of Ghelenjik at 0013, at 0020 2 lighters 3 miles west of Ghelenjik, at 0025 several small vessels off the beachhead and at 0100 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, high speed, 25 miles west of Anapa.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported brisk traffic of small vessels but no movements of heavy surface forces. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea and another off the east coast.

Own Situation:

0100 Cape Takil reported that the naval ferry barge convoy running from Theodosia to Taman was attacked by a submarine off Kys Aul. A torpedo was launched from astern. No result was observed after 3 naval ferry barges had dropped depth charges.

According to the reports of the convoy commanders, the increasing attacks on night convoys between Theodosia and Taman are always made by submarines. However, since torpedo tracks only are sighted and there is never any sign of enemy vessels, I believe that at least some of the attacks are made by M.T.B.s in lurking positions. In spite of the frequency of these attacks, I intend to continue running the convoys between Theodosia and Kerch by night, but I shall have the area between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil patrolled as often as possible by our own E-boats.

0405 S 51 put in to Sevastopol from Constantza.

0445 E-boats S 40, S 42, S 45 and S 46 put in to Kerch from the reconnaissance line north of Temriuk. At 0008 S 40 and S 42 attacked an enemy patrol vessel in air grid square 3586. After 20 rounds, the 4 cm. gun aboard S 40 broke down. S 42 also had trouble with her guns, so only erratic firing was possible. During the action, S 45 was too far away to participate. At 0040 the enemy disappeared from sight.

0515 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put in to Temriuk from the inner patrol line in Temriuk Bay. The boats observed the fight between the E-boats and the enemy patrol vessel. Apart from slight bombing, they had nothing to report.

0900 Two Italian midget submarines put out from Constantza on anti-submarine operations.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Kerch: N - NW winds, force 3 - 4, cloudy, intermittent thunderstorms, visibility 10 - 15 miles.

Kerch - Novorossisk: light winds, fair to cloudy, visibility above 15 miles, temperature on the coast at night about 20° C.

Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to occupy the patrol line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil during the night of 26/27 June to attack enemy M.T.B.s and submarines. The boats will proceed in patrol line at 7 knots 5 miles from the coast. 1st E-Boat Flotilla has been informed of the times when the Kerch-Theodosia convoy should be at Cape Takil, Cape Opuk and Cape Chauda and has been ordered to take evasive action so that the escort vessels of the convoy will have a clear field to attack any approaching vessels. The group of E-boats in Kerch (S 40, S 42, S 45 and S 46) was ordered to re-occupy the

patrol lines north of the Kuban estuary on the next night.

At 1900 4 E-boats put out from Kerch for operations, followed at 2030 by 2 E-boats from Ivan Baba.

The constant failure of the 4 cm. guns aboard the E-boats has not yet been eliminated. This trouble is all the more regrettable, because enemy vessels have been engaged by the E-boats several times in the Sea of Azov, but every time they have escaped destruction because our guns failed. I requested via Group Command that a reliable gunnery expert should be sent from Germany as soon as possible.

1708 U 24 put in to Theodosia from operations. Owing to lack of fuel, the boat was unable to wait off Tuapse for the 7,000-ton tanker to put out. Thus, the tanker convoy was attacked neither by U 24 nor by U 20 which had come to relieve her. Air reconnaissance sighted the tanker convoy at sea at 1620 and U 18 and U 19 which lay further south were directed on to it.

U 18 reported from the operational area that the attack on the 7,000-ton tanker moored alongside the sunken floating dock at Sukhum could not be carried out because of strong defenses. U 18 was observed by patrol vessels at a short distance from the dock and was forced to submerge after pursuit with depth charges during the whole day by a search group and planes.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on convoys or naval surface forces during the day. Mariupol reported that enemy planes flew over the town ten times. Bombs caused no damage. Planes flew over Taganrog and Berdyansk at a high altitude. No bombing.

Between 2100 and 0100, Kerch and Senaya had a few bombs. Minelaying is suspected on route Red north of Kerch Strait.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: While minesweeping was continued off Cape Lukull, 6 more inertia contact mines were cut today. The work will be continued.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear and minesweeping planes swept route Red for ground mines

from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait as far as Temriuk as a result of suspected minelaying. No results as yet. The return convoy from Temriuk to Kerch ran with anti-ground mine escort by the group with skid gear.

The group with towed loop gear checked the route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) four times without result.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 124 ran with 7 naval ferry barges.

Convoy No. 125 put out from Kerch at 1800 with 4 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 39 put in to Kerch on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 34 put out for Temriuk at 1215 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1930 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 13 vessels proceeding from Cape Doob to the southwest.

At 0950 daylight air reconnaissance intercepted the tanker convoy on a southeasterly course 5 miles northwest of Poti. It had left Tuapse on 26 June and is probably making for Poti. The following vessels were also sighted off the Caucasus coast: at 0848 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, off Tuapse; at 0855 6 M.T.B.s and 1 tug, course southeast, 5 miles south of Tuapse and 1 towed convoy putting in to Tuapse; at 0858 1 motor minesweeper 5 miles northwest of Sochi, at 0918 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, course southeast, off Sukhum.

The ports were reconnoitered as far as Ochemchiri. The aerial photographs showed no important changes in comparison with the last few days.

No reconnaissance results from the Sea of Azov. In the southwestern Black Sea, only 1 freighter of about 5,000 tons, course west, was sighted off the Turkish coast 10 miles north of Inebolu.

At 0046 night air reconnaissance located 1 vessel 15 miles southeast of Ghelenjik. No other results.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria did not intercept any heavy surface forces. Activity of small vessels continued off the east coast. Submarines detected: 2 off the east coast and 2 in the western Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Kerch reported that, at 0200 north of Cape Tarkhan, Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 34, consisting of naval ferry barges with 1 tug and 1 lighter, observed 5 mines being dropped about 2 miles north of the route. This was followed by further minelaying at 0050. Minelaying activity was also observed during the night north of Cape Achilleon.

0310 E-boats S 28 and S 47 put in to Ivan Baba from the patrol line ordered between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. Enemy not sighted.

The E-boats operating in the reconnaissance line north of Temriuk Bay observed anti-aircraft fire and firing practice at targets at sea in the north during the night but had no contact with the enemy. Nothing to report from the reconnaissance line.

The boats which put in to Temriuk at 0400 from the inner patrol line off the Kuban estuary did not observe any special incidents except brisk air activity at sea, probably in connection with the minelaying activity north of Kerch Strait.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: W - NW winds, force 4 - 5, squally with showers, visibility 8 - 12 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: SW - W winds, force 4, afterwards veering W - NW and increasing, cloudy, visibility about 10 miles, temperature on the coast at night 20° - 21° C, inland 16° - 17° C.

In such weather, offensive operations by 1st or 11th E-Boat Flotilla were impossible. The E-boats in Kerch were at 3 hours' notice until 1800 and thereafter at 1 hour's notice, but, because of the weather, they were not ordered to put out.

At 0510 U 18 reported from the operational area that she was no longer pursuing the 7,000-ton tanker which sailed from Tuapse to the south. When air reconnaissance spotted the tanker northwest of Sochi at 1620 on 26 June, the boat was in a favorable position near Cape Pitsunda. At 2015 U 18 was again sent the estimated position of the tanker convoy as between Adler and Gagri; close to the coast. She was ordered to remain ahead of the convoy and to proceed at the same speed.

Probably U 18 passed the convoy during the night and was not able to regain contact with her maximum continuous speed of 11 knots.

Later reconnaissance reports showed that the tanker convoy had proceeded much more slowly than had been expected, making only about 8 knots. It would have been better therefore to have continued the pursuit on the general course of the convoy as there might have been another chance to attack it.

U 19, which was about 15 miles west of Cape Anakri on the afternoon of 26 June, was at night ordered by radiogram to take up position immediately off Batum. The tanker convoy might

easily pass her in the dark, if she remained in her present position. On the other hand, it would be possible, on the basis of the morning reconnaissance reports, to lead the boat from her new position on to the tanker again or perhaps the tanker would even run straight into her arms.

There was no morning reconnaissance however, as the aircraft broke down and, in the new position, U 19 did not make contact with the tanker convoy because the latter had unexpectedly put in to Poti instead of Batum contrary to the usual practice.

Because of leakage of her main exhaust valves and both bilge pumps, U 20 commenced return passage to Constantza from the operational area northwest of Tuapse.

1600 U 23 put out from Constantza for operations via the southern route.

1900 U 24 put out from Theodosia for Constantza. She was to proceed on anti-submarine operations along the Crimean coast at 10 to 12 miles from the shore.

1745 Submarine chaser "Xanten" put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine operations in the area between Balaklava and Eupatoria.

1800 Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that 2 naval ferry barges of Anapa convoy No. 125 (F 325 and 539) had also been blown aground while attempting to tow off naval ferry barge F 470 which had been stranded northwest of Anapa on 23 May. The convoy commander left a naval ferry barge as protection from M.T.B.s and put in to Kerch with the remaining 2 naval ferry barges.

When at 2000 the naval ferry barges were still aground, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to send immediately 2 tugs escorted by 2 motor minesweepers (RA) to salvage the 2 naval ferry barges. Anti-aircraft protection during the salvage action will be provided by the naval ferry barges of Anapa convoy No. 126 and, until they will arrive, by a platoon of light anti-aircraft guns on the coast.

Why the convoy commander attempted the independent salvage of the naval ferry barges is not yet known.

2130 The convoy proceeding from Theodosia to Taman ("Engerau", "Dordogne", naval ferry barges F 312 and F 471) was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy submarine 4 miles southeast of Cape Chauda.

Enemy Air Activity:

Enemy planes repeatedly flew over Mariupol, Taganrog and Berdyansk during the night of 26/27 June.

Eight bombs fell on the town area of Taganrog, but no damage was reported. Several impacts were observed on the water surface near the southern tip of Byelosaraika Peninsula. Harbor Defense Flotilla, Mariupol was sent out to check for mines. Planes flew over Anapa four times, dropping high-explosive and incendiary bombs, but no damage was reported.

Novorossisk reported heavy mortar and artillery bombardment of the site at the east harbor, the southern part of the town and the southern sector. A few bombs were also dropped.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping operations near Cape Lukull (north of Sevastopol) were concluded. Altogether 20 inertia contact mines were cut by motor minesweepers in 3 days.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear, motor minesweepers (RA) and minesweeping planes operated in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait because minelaying had been observed near Cape Tarkhan and Cape Achilleon. In spite of the present fuel difficulties, 4 minesweeping planes took part.

The group with towed loop gear did not operate as the vessels were being overhauled.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was hampered by the weather.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 125 ran successfully. On return passage, 2 naval ferry barges ran aground (see above).

Convoy No. 126 put out from Kerch at 1800 with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

No Kerch-Temriuk convoys ran today.

Convoy No. 34, comprising 1 tug, 2 lighters and 4 naval ferry barges, which was proceeding from Genichesk to Temriuk, was diverted to Taman on account of suspected minelaying between Kerch Strait and Temriuk.

d. Convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported lively traffic from the Myshako beachhead: at 0400 3 M.T.B.s, 3 minesweepers and 10 tugs with lighters put in to Gholenjik; at 1835 7 vessels put out from Gholenjik on a southerly course to the assembly area off the Mesib estuary; at 1945 11 more vessels, including 3 minesweepers, 1 (probable) torpedoboat, sea-going tugs and lighters, also proceeded to the assembly area; at 2000 3 M.T.B.s put in to Gholenjik.

A lighter of 350 tons which was drifting westward from landing point 5 in the early morning was sunk by German Army artillery at 1000 after Russian minesweepers had vainly attempted to salvage her.

Daylight air reconnaissance reported increasing traffic of coastal vessels and patrol vessels: at 0603 3 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons and 2 guardboats, course southeast, 10 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0640 1 freighter of 2,000 tons, 1 minesweeper and 1 guardboat, course northwest, slight speed, 5 miles south of Adler; at 0644 5 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons and 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 10 miles south of Gagri.

Enemy shipping in the ports showed little change. In Batum roads there were 2 tankers, each 7,000 tons. This confirms yesterday's supposition that the tanker convoy from Tuapse did not sail to Batum but, contrary to expectation, to Poti.

Steamer traffic off the western part of the Turkish Black Sea coast was again considerable; most vessels were proceeding on an easterly course. According to a report from Naval Group South, it is the usual seasonal increase in traffic, caused by the transportation of coal from the Zonguldak coal center to Turkish ports.

At 2147 night air reconnaissance located several small vessels and boats in the Novorossisk-Gholenjik area; at 2250 1 coastal vessel 15 miles southeast of Sochi; at 2310 1 patrol boat 18 miles south of Tuapse; at 2345 1 towed convoy and 3 M.T.B.s, course southeast, 30 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0030 4 M.T.B.s, course northwest, south of Novorossisk, several small vessels proceeding from Kabardinka Bay to the

beachhead and another small vessel at the beachhead.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria also reported lively activity of small vessels off the east coast, but no heavy surface forces. Submarines detected: 2 in the western Black Sea and off the Crimean coast and 1 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

0127 U 18 reported that she had sunk a lighter of 800 - 1,000 tons in an attack on an enemy towed convoy near Cape Pitsunda. The boat was then pursued with depth charges, but suffered no casualties or damage. She then proceeded to Sevastopol to take in torpedoes and fuel.

The order to proceed to Sevastopol instead of returning to Constantza is the first attempt at carrying out small repairs and taking in torpedoes and fuel in Sevastopol. It will allow the boats to return to the operational area for about 10 days. The shorter approach saves at least 3 days.

In the evening, U 19 reported no enemy traffic in the operational area. No reports were received from the Italian midget submarines which were on anti-submarine patrol southeast of Constantza.

0400 The coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line north of the Kuban estuary. No enemy vessels were sighted. Lively air activity at sea, bombs dropped on the patrol line. No damage or casualties.

The 2 naval ferry barges of Anapa convoy No. 125 which had run aground northwest of Anapa on the evening of 27 June were refloated this morning and are now on return passage to Kerch with the tugs and escort vessels which had been sent to assist them.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: W - N winds, force 2 - 3, increasing in the afternoon, intermittent clouds, local thunderstorms, visibility above 15 miles, temperature on the coast at night about 20° C.

Motor minesweepers R 203 and R 204 were commissioned today for 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla in Linz and colors were hoisted.

The assembly area for the enemy convoys proceeding from Ghelenjik, which the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk has repeatedly reported but which air reconnaissance has not yet been able to determine accurately, is probably the Mesib estuary, some 5 miles southeast of Ghelenjik. During a torpedo attack on 13 June, U 24 identified 3 coastal vessels here at the jetty. With the aim of intercepting the supply convoys which are believed to proceed from here to the beachhead, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate during the night of 28/29 June against enemy supply traffic along the coast between Ghelenjik and Cape Chugovkopas and to attack any vessels at the landing point at the Mesib estuary with guns or torpedoes according to circumstances. Approach and return passage via Anapa and the coastal route.

Two boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate in the patrol line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil about 5 miles from the coast on the night of 28/29 June. The flotilla was informed that the repeated attacks on our own convoys in this area might have been made not only by submarines but also by M.T.B.s.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea requested the immediate allocation of 4 naval ferry barges for night patrol of the area off Sulina and for efficient attacks on enemy mine-laying planes. However, in view of the Army supply requirements for the Gotenkopf bridgehead, this is not possible with the naval ferry barges at present available. The other request of Commander, Convoys and Escorts for boats of 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla for minesweeping in the Sulina area must also be rejected, because 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla is exclusively and urgently needed to provide convoy escorts close to the Crimean coast. I have therefore suggested placing 4 boats of 19th Harbor Defense Flotilla at the disposal of Commander, Convoys and Escorts and have commissioned him to choose suitable boats with the consent of Commander, 19th Harbor Defense Flotilla.

On inquiry, Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla reported from Mariupol that naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 would probably be ready for action at 0001 on 3 July when their engines, damaged during the bombardment of Yeisk, had been repaired.

1625 Submarine chaser "Xanten" put out from Sevastopol for anti-submarine patrol in the area between Eupatoria and Balaklava.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and coastal defense boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duty off the Kuban estuary.

Enemy Air Activity:

No attacks on convoys or naval forces during the day. Mariupol and Taganrog reported that a few enemy planes had flown over the towns. Four bombs were dropped on Taganrog, causing no damage.

Novorossisk had no air raids, but the usual artillery and mortar bombardment of the sites at the east harbor, the southern part of the town and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Steamer convoys will proceed to Sevastopol in the next few days. In order to protect them against mines, the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to check route Green with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant from Sevastopol to Cape Tarkhankutzki on 29 June. After carrying out this task, the group will serve as anti-mine escort for U 18 from point SS to Sevastopol from 1400.

The FZ-Group, Sevastopol swept route Green six times north of the approach buoy without result.

Kerch Strait: The group with towed loop gear swept the route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) six times without result. Minesweeping planes searched for ground mines from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait in the direction of Temriuk. They swept the area four times to a width of 800 meters north and south of the route, but found no mines.

Mariupol: 3 boats of the harbor defense flotilla checked for moored mines between Mariupol and Kossa Byelosaraika. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Transportation performance by ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was reduced by lack of cargo. This was caused by the blasting of a railroad bridge west of Kerch, the result of sabotage. It is planned to increase the Theodosia-Taman convoys from 30 June to balance the transportation figures.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 126 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 127 put out from Kerch at 1830 with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1800 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 40 put out from Temriuk for return passage to Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 2 lighters.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 34, which was diverted to Taman, is on return passage from Taman to Genichesk.

The sailing of convoy No. 35 was postponed for 1 day because of the danger of mines.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

29 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0415 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 3 minesweepers, 1 tug, 2 lighters and 2 patrol vessels entering Ghelenjik. One patrol vessel was sunk by dive-bombers.

Daylight air reconnaissance over the Caucasus coast was badly impeded by the weather: at 0640 1 freighter of 2,000 tons, 1 minesweeper and 1 patrol vessel, course northwest, were sighted 5 miles south of Adler; at 0612 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, course southeast, 30 miles northwest of Sukhum.

The ports on the Caucasus coast were only partially reconnoitered because of the weather. No results.

Off the Turkish coast, only 1 freighter of 3,000 tons was sighted off Kerempeh Burnu on a westerly course.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

On account of the weather there was no night reconnaissance.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported slight activity of small vessels compared with the last few days. No heavy surface forces were located. Submarines detected: 4 in the western Black Sea, including the Crimean coast area. At 0330 the following radiogram was intercepted from a small enemy vessel: "Have been hit, am out of control".

Type and position of the vessel were not discovered.

Own Situation:

0140 The Taman-Theodosia convoy of 6 naval ferry barges, 2 tugs and 2 lighters was attacked with 3 torpedoes 10 miles southeast of Cape Chauda. It is not clear whether the attack was made by a submarine or by an M.T.B., but probably it was a submarine in a lurking position near the Elchan Kaya cliffs. Two torpedoes missed and the third hit the stern of naval ferry barge F 325 which was the forward starboard escort of the convoy. The torpedo did not explode. Naval ferry barges F 325 and F 471 dropped 12 depth charges, but no results were observed.

At 0542 4 enemy planes dropped 10 - 12 bombs on the same convoy off Theodosia harbor entrance. The attack was made from an altitude of 3,500 meters. The bombs fell 200 - 300 meters from the convoy without causing any damage. The ship's guns were powerless because of the high altitude. At 0630 the convoy put in to Theodosia.

0145 Enemy minelaying activity was observed north of the entrance to the Temriuk channel. Traffic to Temriuk will be continued on a diversionary route.

0400 The coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. Two boats of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Temriuk made contact with an enemy motor gunboat at 0030 and naval ferry barge F 401 contacted the same boat at 0050. The harbor defense boats attacked the enemy boat with ship's guns and hand grenades and afterwards F 401 fired her 2 cm. and 7.5 cm. guns. The boat returned the fire with a 4.5 cm. gun. Numerous hits and explosions were observed on the enemy boat which then disappeared. Destruction is probable. Slight damage was caused aboard naval ferry barge F 401 and harbor defense vessel RT 01, and 1 man was seriously wounded and 1 slightly wounded.

0445 S 501 and S 502 put in to Theodosia from operations at 0445. No enemy forces were sighted in the area between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil.

0510 E-boats S 28, S 42, S 46 and S 47 put in to Ivan Baba from the operation against the Mesib estuary. No enemy vessels were sighted in the operational area. On account of the weather (rising NE wind), the boats commenced return passage earlier than was planned at 2400. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the operation on the following night.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light variable winds, sea wind on the coasts up to force 4, fair, cloudy in the afternoon, visibility 15 - 20 miles, temperature at night 18° - 20° C.

1015 U 24 put in to Constantza from operations.

1115 U 20 put in to Constantza from operations.

Their operational reports are not yet available. U 24 is to have a routine overhaul, while U 20, after repair of the reported damage, will

probably be ready for action again about 6 July.

1915 With motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 as anti-mine escort, U 18 put in to Sevastopol at 1915. After taking in torpedoes and fuel and having some slight damage repaired, the boat will be ready for action again about 2 July.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 15 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty. At 2200 harbor defense boats RK 05 and RT 02 reported engine trouble and dropped anchor in shallow water near the patrol line.

There was a conference with Chief of Staff, Admiral, Black Sea and Chief of Staff, Army Group A about the plan of Admiral, Black Sea for the Navy to support the Army by decoy landings on the coast of the Sea of Azov (naval gunnery lighters and naval ferry barges).

Enemy Air Activity:

No enemy air attacks on convoys or naval forces with the exception of the attack on the Taman-Theodosia convoy.

None of the ports on the Crimean coast was attacked. During the night, about 40 enemy planes flew over the Taman-Senaya area. Only a few bombs were dropped on land; probably the other planes laid mines in Temriuk Bay.

No air attacks on Novorossisk, but the usual artillery and anti-tank bombardment of the harbor sites and the southern part of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept the area between Sevastopol and Cape Tarkhankutzki and acted as anti-mine escort for U 18. Anti-mine escort will be provided for the "Boy Feddersen", "Burgas" and "Tisza" convoy which will be proceeding from Constantza on 30 June.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear acted as anti-ground-mine escort for Temriuk convoys. Minesweeping planes checked route Red once for ground mines from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait as far as Temriuk to a width of 800 meters on each side of the route. Operations by the minesweeping planes stationed in Kerch are at present considerably hampered by the inadequate fuel allocation. I pointed out to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus that sweeping of the coastal

routes to a width of 1,600 meters would also be impossible for this reason and that more frequent checks of one narrow route would promise better results.

Mariupol: The harbor defense flotilla continued to search for mines between Mariupol and Berdyansk, while the FZ-group operated off Genichesk.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was further reduced by the break in railroad supplies. Only 1,270 tons of supply goods are ready for transshipment in Kerch for 30 June.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 127 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges. It put in to Kerch at 1910 on return passage. Convoy No. 128 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges at 1615.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 40 put in to Kerch at 1235 on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 freight towing vessel, 1 tug and 1 lighter. Convoy No. 41 put out for Temriuk at 2000 with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 towing vessels, 1 tug and 2 lighters. On account of the mine situation, the convoy anchored near Cape Warsovka in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. The convoy will continue passage on 30 June.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 34 put in to Genichesk at 0930 on return passage.

Convoy No. 35 put out for Temriuk at 1050 with 3 naval ferry barges.

d. Theodosia-Taman and Mariupol-Taganrog convoys, Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

30 June, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum. On account of poor visibility, results were incomplete: at 0815 1 M.T.B., course northwest, 5 miles west of Sochi; at 0910 1 patrol boat, stopped, 17 miles west of Poti. No traffic of coastal vessels or lighters was observed.

Enemy shipping in the Caucasus ports:

Tuapse at 0952 (aerial photograph, oblique view): 12 coastal vessels totaling about 3,000 tons, 3 motor minesweepers, 1 M.T.B. and 20 small boats.
Owing to the weather, Ghelenjik was only partially examined and the ports from Sochi to Poti were not reconnoitered at all.
Batum at 0901 (aerial photograph, oblique view): 1 heavy cruiser of the "Kirov" class, the heavy cruiser "Krasny Kavkas", 2 destroyers of the "Storojevey" class, 1 destroyer of the "Gnevny" class, 2 submarines, 2 passenger ships of 9,000 and 4,000 tons respectively, 3 tankers, each 7,000 tons, and 2 freighters, each 4,000 tons. According to reports from the Air Force, the results are of limited value because of the weather and the oblique view, and the position of the tanker which put out again from Tuapse on 27 June is not certain.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Off the Turkish coast, there was further lively traffic of large freighters, mostly Turkish.

At 2330 night air reconnaissance located 1 patrol vessel, course northwest, 20 miles northwest of Tuapse.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria intercepted no enemy surface forces at sea from radio traffic. Supply traffic of small vessels was much lighter than on the last few days. Submarines detected: 4 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area and 2 in the Caucasus coast area.

Own Situation:

0030 Because minelaying activity had been observed off Blagoveshchenskaya on the evening of 29 June, Anapa convoy No. 128 was diverted south of Maria Magdalena Bank instead of proceeding by route Brown.

M.T.B.s fired a torpedo at Anapa harbor at 0045. The torpedo exploded 500 meters west of the mole without causing any damage. Two enemy M.T.B.s were observed and when they were shelled, they immediately turned off, putting up a smoke screen.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and harbor defense boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. Nothing to report with the exception of engine trouble aboard 2 harbor defense boats.

0600 From 2300 until 2400, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were in lurking positions off the Mesib estuary. At 2349 S 47 fired a double torpedo shot at an enemy patrol vessel. The torpedoes exploded prematurely in shallow water or in a net barrage off the river mouth. This means that the landing places cannot be attacked with torpedoes.

After the explosion of the torpedoes, the E-boats were at once picked up by numerous searchlights. Then, as they turned off, coastal guns of up to 13.2 cm. caliber opened up and for a short time naval air reconnaissance planes machine-gunned them. The E-boats fired back at the search-lights with 4 cm. guns and they were temporarily extinguished. No enemy forces were sighted on return passage close to the coast. The boats put in to Ivan Baba at 0600.

0700 I left Simferopol for 2 days in Varna to have a conference with Commander-in-Chief, Royal Bulgarian Navy on the possibility of commissioning Bulgarian forces for escort tasks in the south-western Black Sea. I called Chief, German Naval Command, Constantza to the conference. I shall also inspect the offices of the Special Command, Varna.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: light S - SW winds, increasing in the afternoon to force 4 - 5, during the night W winds, force 4, cloudy, intermittent thunderstorms, visibility except in showers 20 miles, temperature at night 12° - 16° C.

The operations by 11th E-Boat Flotilla in the Cape Chauda-Cape Takil area and those by 1st E-Boat Flotilla off the Caucasus coast cannot be considered in such weather.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were therefore ordered to occupy the patrol line north of Temriuk Bay during the night of 30 June/1 July as on 25/26 June, returning to Kerch after this task. Since today's experience shows that the enemy will continue to employ motor gunboats against the Temriuk coast, only boats equipped with 4 cm. guns will operate.

As the activity of the Russian Air Force has considerably increased in the last few days, we must also expect intensified attacks on our E-boat bases, Ivan Baba and Theodosia. The limited space in the two ports constitutes a special danger as the boats cannot be scattered. In Ivan Baba, where, since 1st E-Boat Flotilla was reinforced, about 9 boats are stationed permanently, one accurate heavy bomb could destroy the whole flotilla. This would mean the destruction of the core of my offensive forces. I therefore consider it vital to construct 8 E-boat bunkers in Ivan Baba and 8 in Theodosia to protect the boats from air attacks and also from bombardment of the harbors by naval forces at sea. I have submitted this request accordingly.

0945 The steamer convoy ("Boy Feddersen", "Burgas" and "Tisza", escorted by Rumanian destroyers, gunboats and 3 boats of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla) was divided off Cape Tarkhankutzki into a fast and a slow group. "Boy Feddersen" and some of the escort vessels put in to Sevastopol at 0945 and the rest of the convoy arrived at 1030.

1200 Ak Mechet reported that a Russian motor fishing vessel observed a surfaced enemy submarine 3 miles from the coast.

When hatch 2 of freight towing vessel "Vitez" was opened, the gasoline cargo exploded and caught fire. The vessel had put in to Temriuk from Kerch. In spite of the immediate attempts of all available forces to extinguish the fire, the vessel burned out completely by 1930. The harbor was immediately cleared and the fire did not spread to other vessels of the convoy. Cause of the fire is not yet known. There is no question of sabotage as the vessel was loaded by soldiers in Kerch under the surveillance of the local Sea Transportation Office. Casualties: Commander, Sea Transportation, Temriuk and the convoy commander were seriously wounded, while the captain of "Vitez" was slightly injured.

Operational reports of U 18, U 20 and U 24:

According to a report from the commander of U 18 on her operation from 16 to 29 June, enemy traffic

in the Ghelenjik-Tuapse area (19 - 21 June) runs close to the coast, at the most 1 mile from it, offering hardly any opportunities for attack. South of Tuapse as far as Uchdere (22 - 24 June) traffic is heavier and the vessels are worthwhile targets for torpedoes. Here, the 1,000-ton steamer from a southbound convoy was sunk on 23 June, using a magnetic torpedo. During the night of 24/25 June, the boat thrust to Sukhum roads, but because of a heavy depth charge pursuit, it was not possible to fire a torpedo at the 7,000-ton tanker there. The boat operated against the tanker convoy (7,000 tons) which was proceeding from Tuapse to the south in the Cape Pitsunda area on 26/27 June, but was unsuccessful. On 28 June, 2 torpedoes were fired at a towed convoy: 1 lighter of 800 - 1,000 tons was sunk and the other torpedo missed.

There were naval patrols over the whole area. Air patrol was heavy when the boat was observed, at other times normal.

U 20 also reported strong patrol by submarine chasers and M.T.B.s. The operation had to be broken off during the forenoon of 26 June after damage caused by depth charges.

The commander of U 24 reported that during his operation from 5 to 29 June there was heavy air patrol with fast machines in the Ghelenjik-Tuapse area. Naval patrol in that area was only moderate. On 13 June, on passage to the Sukhum-Ochemchiri operational area, U 24 passed an enemy destroyer which was proceeding at high speed. She had no opportunity for attack. In the Ochemchiri area, 1 single escort vessel (Weyer, page 374) was sunk on 15 June. U 24 operated against the 7,000-ton tanker proceeding in convoy to Tuapse, but did not gain contact on account of her unfavorable position.

1330 As a result of these reports, U 19 which had been operating off Batum was ordered by radiogram to proceed to the operational area off Cape Pitsunda.

1455 Three new vessels of 23rd Submarine Chaser Flotilla, Nos. 2304, 2305 and 2306, put in to Constantza from Varna at 1455. Thus the first 6 boats of the flotilla are ready for action.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla reported that naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 which are in Sevastopol would be ready for action on 1 July

after their prescribed short training period. They will carry out practice firing at sea on 1 July.

2300 Anapa reported that 7 enemy M.T.B.s were sighted 7 miles west of Cape Utrich. Three boats near the coast were shelled by an anti-aircraft battery and made off to the southwest.

Enemy Air Activity:

Only Tagahrog and Novorossisk had air raids. Three bombs caused minor damage near the buildings of Naval Harbor Master, Taganrog. Novorossisk reported numerous high-explosive and incendiary bombs and flares on the town and harbor area and the surrounding district. There was also artillery and mortar bombardment of the southern part of the town and the southern sector. No damage was reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla acted as anti-mine escort for the steamer convoy putting in to Sevastopol. No further mines were cut.

In the Danube Delta, mine-exploding vessel No. 193 swept 1 mine and minesweeping planes another.

Kerch Strait: 2 motor minesweepers (RA) swept for moored mines from the northern entrance to Kerch Strait along the new route to Temriuk without result. Minesweeping planes also covered the same area once to a width of 800 meters, no mines swept.

The FZ-Group, Genichesk swept the area off the harbor entrance on both sides of the line of buoys without result.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was today still considerably reduced, but from tomorrow it should be normal again.

b. Anapa convoys:

At 1700 convoy No. 128 put in to Kerch on return passage with 6 naval ferry barges.

Convoy No. 129 put out from Kerch at 1750 with 6 naval ferry barges and anchored near Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1100 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 41 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 2 freight-towing vessels, 1 tug and 2 lighters. After discharging their cargo, the naval ferry barges returned to Kerch at 1630. (For total loss of freight-towing vessel "Vitez", see above.) Genichesk-Temriuk traffic and Theodosia-Taman supply traffic were increased to balance the reduced transportation performance by the ferry traffic in Kerch Strait.

Convoy No. 35, which put out on 29 June with 4 naval ferry barges, was followed today by convoy No. 36 which put out for Temriuk at 1130. Both convoys ran with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident. Theodosia-Taman supply traffic and the timber transports from Yalta to Kerch and Taman were increased. The 2 sections of the Constantza-Sevastopol steamer convoy put in to Sevastopol as scheduled at 0945 and 1030.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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Survey for June 1943

A. Enemy merchant ships sunk:

1. By U-boats: 1 escort vessel of 800 tons,
1 freighter of 1,000 tons and
1 lighter of 800 - 1,000 tons.

2. By E-boats: 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and
1 lighter of 300 tons.

Total: 3,500 tons.

B. Enemy naval forces sunk:

By naval ferry barges: probably 1 motor gunboat (off Temriuk).

C. Enemy planes brought down by naval forces:

Nine planes were reported shot down (confirmation pending). 14 planes were brought down by the fighters escorting our convoys.

D. Enemy air raids:

1. On warships and convoys: 38

2. On ports in the Crimea: 11

3. Numerous attacks on ports and loading centers at the Kuban bridgehead: 363 penetrations with 994 bombs.

E. Enemy submarine attacks: 15.

F. Convoys escorted: in the month of June, naval forces escorted 219 vessels totaling 148,595 G.R.T.

G. Supply traffic to the Kuban bridgehead and the Mius front:

1. Kerch-Anapa convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges):	12,495 tons
2. Kerch-Temriuk convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):	13,900 tons
3. Genichesk-Temriuk convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):	10,789 tons
4. Theodosia-Taman convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters):	6,856 tons

5. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait (Navy's share 20,987 tons): ..... 53,328 tons

Total convoy supplies to the Gotenkopf bridgehead: 97,368 tons

Tonnage carried by the Navy: 65,027 tons

Thus the scheduled figure of 3,000 tons daily was surpassed by 7,368 tons (sic) for the month.

6. Yalta-Kerch timber transports (naval ferry barges): 787 tons

7. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys: 864 tons

8. In Kerch Strait the following supplies were also transported to the east:

	By the Army and Air Force:	By the Navy:
Motor vehicles	6,060	16
Other vehicles	3,519	279
Guns	271	4
Field mail	137 tons	20 tons
Personnel	81,724	2,280
Horses	12,776	578
Head of cattle	-	3,440

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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APPENDIX I

COPY

Admiral, Black Sea. 16 June, 1943

Serial No. Gkdos. Chefs. 157 A I.

To:
Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Mariupol
Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, Mariupol
1st Air Corps, Simferopol.

Copy to:
Army Group A, Operations Division, Simferopol
17th Army H.Q. via Naval Liaison Officer
Naval Group South, Ops., Sofia.

A. Situation:

The enemy has transferred light naval forces (motor minesweepers or M.T.B.s) by railroad to Yeisk. In the enclosed aerial photograph taken on 15 June, 6 large vessels (apparently motor minesweepers) can be distinguished in Yeisk harbor in addition to some 30 small boats. Obviously the enemy will attempt to use these vessels to paralyze or disrupt our supply traffic in the Sea of Azov. It is therefore vital that these enemy forces be destroyed immediately.

B. Orders:

1. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3, with navigational assistance from motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56, will attack and, if possible, sink the vessels in Yeisk by shelling them.

2. Command: Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla.

3. The formation will put out from Mariupol on X-day to pass position A (see enclosed diagram) about 2030. 18 June is scheduled as X-day. The operation will be carried out on receipt of dated codeword

"Y a r m o u t h",

date indicating X-day. Bombardment of Yeisk at daybreak on X+1 day.

4. Outward and return passage in accordance with the enclosed diagram. Look out for the enemy danger areas sketched on the basis of prisoners' statements. After bombardment, return passage at maximum cruising speed.

5. If 1 naval gunnery lighter breaks down on outward passage, the operation is still to be carried out, but if two break down, the operation is to be abandoned. In the event of 1 naval gunnery lighter breaking down, 1 motor minesweeper (RA) should be detailed to protect her.

6. Secret material including any unnecessary codes should be delivered to Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine before sailing. If a vessel is seriously damaged by enemy bombardment, by striking a mine etc., the vessel is to be blown up or destroyed by naval gunnery lighters, if return passage or towing to Mariupol is found to be impossible. Guns and engines are to be destroyed by explosion and all important parts made unserviceable. Preparations should be made for such action.

C. Execution of the bombardment:

1. The bombardment should be started as early as possible whenever impacts can be clearly observed and fire controlled. The exact time will therefore depend on visibility and weather on X+1 day. passage should be organized to reach position B at the right time for the bombardment.

2. The naval gunnery lighters will make for position B in port quarterline formation (30°). At position B, the formation will alter to line ahead, course approximately 227°, and, reducing speed, will open fire suddenly.

3. General instructions for fire distribution:

a. If fire is not returned by enemy batteries, vessels should proceed to the sectors marked in the enclosed aerial photograph.

b. The main task is the destruction of enemy vessels and target should immediately be altered to any enemy forces which put out during the bombardment. Ships in the roads or vessels which put out before the bombardment should be destroyed before any other action is taken.

c. Before altering course to 227°, any seaplanes visible in the naval air base at Yeisk (see aerial photograph) should be attacked.

d. While making off after the bombardment of the harbor, the formation should shell the railroad installations southeast of the inner harbor basin if the target can be seen distinctly.

e. If our formation should be attacked by coastal batteries, all naval gunnery lighters should open up against the batteries until they alter

course to 227°, unless naval vessels mentioned in para. C.3.b. appear. Then after altering course, tactical vessel No. 1 will bombard the sector allotted to her in the aerial photograph, vessel No. 2 her sector and that allotted to vessel No. 3, while vessel No. 3 will continue to engage the coastal batteries.

f. The vessel in the outer harbor is a sunken paddle-steamer and should not be attacked.

4. During the bombardment, motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 will remain on the disengaged side.

5. Ammunition used for the bombardment of the harbor should amount to two-thirds of the 8.8 cm. shells.

D. Communications arrangements: See Appendix.

E. 1st Air Corps has been requested to provide fighter protection for the formation on X+1 day from 0315 until the formation returns to Mariupol. At 0315 on X+1 day, the formation should be north of Yeisk harbor about 3 miles from the coast. 1st Air Corps has been informed that the execution of the operation depends upon the allocation of this fighter protection.

F. Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine will make the following arrangements:

1. Motor minesweepers RM 2 and RM 3 will be at immediate readiness in Mariupol in case of emergency at sea from the time when the naval gunnery lighter formation sails until it returns.

2. Naval Shore Commander will inform the coastal authorities, particularly the battery near Krivaya Kossa, of the passing of the formation.

3. To avoid compromising our formation, he will ensure that, from 2030 until 0100 on X+1 day, searchlights, including the anti-aircraft searchlights, will not sweep the area off the coast between Mariupol and Krivaya Kossa.

4. He will provide a pilot for Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla for putting out from and re-entering Mariupol.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

1 - 15 JULY, 1943

PG/31535

CONFIDENTIAL

1 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance was flown along the Caucasus coast as far as Batum, but in bad visibility only slight traffic was detected: at 0707 1 freighter of 800 tons and 3 patrol vessels, course south, off Tuapse; at 0713 1 minesweeper and 2 motor minesweepers, course north, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0849 1 M.T.B., course south, west of Gagri.

Owing to the weather, the ports could only be partially examined. As far as could be seen, the number of ships in port was normal.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Eight freighters totaling about 10,000 tons and 8 coastal vessels were sighted in the south-western Black Sea off the Turkish coast.

At 2323 night air reconnaissance located 2 small vessels 10 miles southwest of Ghelenjik and at 0030 1 small coastal vessel and 7 boats south of the Myshako beachhead.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no activity of surface forces and only slight traffic of small vessels. Submarines detected: 2 in the western Black Sea including the Crimean coast area and 1 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

0245 The 4 naval ferry barges (F 331, 336, 338 and 532) allocated to Admiral, Aegean Sea put out from Constantza for Varna where they arrived at 1515. As one of the naval ferry barges had engine trouble, the group will not proceed to the Bosporus until she has been repaired in Varna.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. They reported lively air activity at sea. Bombs were dropped close to the boats, causing no damage. Otherwise nothing to report.

0507 Four boats of 1st. E-Boat Flotilla put in to Kerch from the reconnaissance line in the south-eastern Sea of Azov. No enemy forces were sighted. Nothing to report.

0737 Several enemy planes were sighted, circling 6 miles southwest of Cape Chauda. Minelaying is suspected. Coastal route Brown was not closed because the minelaying ~~area is~~ at least 27 meters deep and lies south of the route.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light W winds, freshening with sea wind in the afternoon, W - NW winds, force 3 - 2 in the evening and at night, fair, visibility 20 miles, temperature at night 12° - 15° C.

Commander, Danube Flotilla reported that the FZ-groups had been withdrawn from the Danube Flotilla and incorporated simultaneously into 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla under Lieutenant Commander Helleparth who is on T.A.D. Kerch will be their main port of accommodation until further notice.

1000 Mariupol reported that 2 boats of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Mariupol landed 1 agent on the enemy coast in Taganrog Bay near Dolchartskaya. No incidents.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat last night's operation (reconnaissance line in the southeastern Sea of Azov) with S 40, S 46, S 51 and S 102 on the night of 1/2 July. With the exception of S 40, all the boats carry 4 cm. guns. At 1830 the boats put out from Kerch.

Three more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to attack the Myshako landing place and the enemy traffic running to the beachhead. Outward passage via the open sea, return passage via the coastal route in reconnaissance line to attack any enemy forces which might be returning from operations against the Taman or Crimean coast. At 2000 the boats put out from Ivan Baba.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to operate on the night of 1/2 July against enemy M.T.B.s and submarines which might be attacking our own convoys between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. The boats were to proceed in reconnaissance line about 5 miles off the coast at a speed of some 7 knots. The flotilla was informed of the hours of passage of both the convoys running on this night and of 1st E-Boat Flotilla's operation against Myshako. At 2030 S 501 and S 503 put out from Theodosia for the operation.

In view of experiences reported by U 18, U 20 and U 24, U 19 and U 23 were ordered to make

short sorties to the immediate vicinity of the Caucasus coast.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty.

2100 "Ship 19" reported a breakdown in her search gear in the operational area. She planned to proceed to Constantza with "Xanten". Although "Xanten" also had trouble with her search gear, Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea directed her to remain in the operational area.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on naval forces or convoys. Enemy planes flew over Mariupol, Berdyansk and Taganrog, dropping 15 bombs on Berdyansk. No damage was reported. At 1400 5 planes raided Yalta, dropping 30 bombs on the harbor area and on Massandra. No casualties or damage were reported. Senaya and Taman reported minor bombing activity; some bombs fell in the sea, no damage to naval property. Novorossisk reported no air raids, but the usual artillery fire on the harbor sites and the town area.

Minesweeping Activity:

At 0500 mine-exploding vessel No. 192 put out on minesweeping duty off Sevastopol. No results have so far been reported.

Kerch Strait: The group with towed loop gear and the group with skid gear widened the route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor (west). Each group covered the area four times. No mines swept. Minesweeping planes operated on the Kerch-Temriuk coastal route. They swept the area twice without sweeping any mines.

The FZ-Group, Genichesk marked the fairway off the harbor entrance.

Supply Traffic:

a. Daily performance of transportation by ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was again normal (some 2,300 tons) after the repair of the railroad bridge west of Kerch. Performance on 2 July should amount to some 2,600 tons, of which 225 tons are to be transported by rope railway for west-east transportation. During the interruption of traffic in Kerch Strait, an average daily performance of 3,000 tons was maintained by the increased Theodosia-Taman-Temriuk traffic despite all difficulties.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 129 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1645 convoy No. 130 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 42 put out from Kerch at 1845 with 6 naval ferry barges.

At 1400 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 35 commenced return passage to Genichesk with 3 naval ferry barges.

At 1145 convoy No. 36 put in to Temriuk from Genichesk with 3 naval ferry barges. At 1600 the convoy commenced return passage with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 freight towing vessel, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

Theodosia-Taman convoys were increased.

CONFIDENTIAL

2 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0345 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 9 vessels entering Ghelenjik. From 1915 to 1945 2 mine-sweepers, 1 freighter alleged to be about 1,500 tons, 1 patrol vessel, 4 towed convoys, 1 small vessel and 2 M.T.B.s were sighted putting out from Ghelenjik to the south.

Daylight air reconnaissance over the Caucasus coast was without result as the crew of the plane could not be interrogated because the plane made a crash landing. The salvaged photographs revealed nothing of importance in the ports.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Lively traffic of Turkish freighters off the Turkish coast was again detected within Turkish territorial waters.

Night air reconnaissance had nothing to report.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no activity of large surface vessels. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea, 2 south of Kerch Strait and in the eastern Black Sea.

Own Situation:

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 12 boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Apart from lively air activity over the sea, they had nothing to report.

0500 Theodosia reported that 2 boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla (S 501 and S 503) had occupied the reconnaissance line off the south coast of Kerch Peninsula as ordered. Nothing was observed in the operational area. At 0430, while the boats were on return passage, 3 bombers approached 18 miles east of Theodosia. No bombing, no machine-gunning. S 501 fired 18 rounds of her 2 cm. guns without visible result. One enemy plane was later shot down by an Me 110.

0530 E-boats S 40, S 46, S 51 and S 102 put in to Kerch from the reconnaissance line in the south-eastern Sea of Azov. No enemy forces were sighted.

0620 Three more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla (S 28, S 42 and S 47) put in to Ivan Baba from the operation against the Myshako beachhead. Nothing was sighted on return passage in reconnaissance line from Myshako to Cape Utrich.

The E-boats have repeatedly failed to sight any enemy vessels off Myshako, while, even during the E-boats' period in the operational area, the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on Myshako mountain has consistently reported enemy shipping traffic. As I believe these reports denote traffic north of Cape Suchuk inside Novorossisk Bay, I directed Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk to determine the area of the enemy supply traffic specifically in future. Landing places north of Cape Suchuk cannot be reached by our E-boats.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: SW - W winds, force 2 - 4, increasing clouds from the west and light showers, visibility 10 miles.

After taking in more torpedoes and fuel, U 18 was ordered to put out from Sevastopol at 1300 on 3 July and to proceed via the northern route to the Ghelenjik-Tuapse operational area. The Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was to act as anti-mine escort as far as point SS 1 and then sweep route Brown as far as Cape Takil with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant.

Two boats of 1st Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla were ordered to put out at 0900 on 3 July for anti-submarine operations in the exercise areas southeast of Constantza.

Some time ago, I ordered a well-armed, mobile assault detachment to be formed at each battery for defense against probable landings by parachute or airborne troops in the vicinity of coastal batteries in the command area. These units have already been established.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty north of the Kuban estuary.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on our naval forces or convoys during the day. On the night of 1/2 July, the enemy attacked several ports in the command area. Planes flew over Mariupol and Taganrog several times without bombing and, from 2040 to 2145,

repeated attacks were made with high-explosive bombs. No damage reported by the Navy. At 2345 high-explosive and incendiary bombs were dropped on Anapa, causing no damage. Novorossisk reported 35 bombs dropped on the town area; mortar and artillery bombardment of the sites at the east harbor and the town area; rocket-firing guns shelled the southern and northern parts of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear and the group with towed loop gear checked the route to the new fish-salting factory harbor (west) seven times. No mines swept. Minesweeping planes checked the Kerch-Temriuk route for ground mines. No mines swept. The proposed route for the Yenikale-Kossa Chushka oil pipeline was swept by Harbor Defense Flotilla, Kerch.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Anapa convoy No. 130 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1830 convoy No. 131 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges and anchored off Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 2130 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 42 put in to Kerch on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges. At 1715 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 36 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 2 tugs, 2 lighters and 4 naval ferry barges.

At 1150 convoy No. 37 put out from Genichesk with 3 naval ferry barges. With this convoy, FZ 23 (of FZ-Group, Genichesk) sailed to Kerch for repairs.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. In view of the convoys held up in Kerch, increased Theodosia-Taman convoys will continue to run up to and including 5 July. There will be an extra convoy from Theodosia to Taman and another from Taman to Theodosia daily.

CONFIDENTIAL

3 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0420 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 1 large and 1 small vessel entering Ghelenjik.

In medium visibility, the Air Force reconnoitered the Caucasus coast as far as Batum. Slight traffic: at 0719 1 towed convoy totaling 1,000 tons, and 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, off Tuapse; at 0755 1 minesweeper, course southeast, and 1 motor minesweeper with otter gear, course northwest, off Sukhum.

All the enemy ships in Caucasus ports could not be examined because of the weather and the oblique view. In Poti at 0855, apart from 1 battleship and 1 heavy cruiser, 3 tankers, each 7,000 tons, and 1 freighter of 4,000 tons were sighted. Thus the enemy's 7 large tankers were distributed as follows: 3 in Poti, 3 in Batum and the seventh still in Sochi.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Traffic in the southwestern Black Sea within Turkish territorial waters was less than in the last few days. Only 1 freighter of 1,500 tons and 2 coastal vessels were sighted.

At 2314, night air reconnaissance reported 3 small vessels off Novorossisk. Further reconnaissance was broken off because of the weather.

No large naval vessels were inferred to be at sea by Main Naval D/F Station. Slight traffic off the east coast. Submarines detected: 1 in the Crimean area and 1 off the east coast.

After fighting lasting for weeks on the Army front at the Kuban bridgehead, direct communications have been established in the sector of 49th (Mountain) Army Corps (Kurka front) along our front lines from the Kurka front as far as the coastal sector north of Temriuk via the isthmus in the lagoon area.

Own Situation:

The night of 2/3 July passed without any German offensive operations or any special enemy activity.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and coastal defense boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. No incidents apart from enemy air activity and bombing off the Temriuk channel and along the coast.

0900 Two Italian midget submarines put out from Constantza for anti-submarine operations in air grid squares 9430, 9450 and 9470.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: NW winds, force 3, cloudy, visibility 20 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: SW winds, force 3 - 4, later veering W - NW, thundery squalls, visibility 15 - 20 miles.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate against enemy traffic close to the Caucasus coast off the Vulan valley between Ghelenjik and Tuapse on the night of 3/4 July. Outward and return passage via the coastal route as far as Anapa. Coastal authorities and Anapa convoys have been informed.

At 1700 the boats put out as ordered but had to turn about at 2135 in air grid square 6565 because of the weather (SW winds, force 5 - 6, sea 4 - 5). At 0200 they put in to Ivan Baba again. After repairs, S 72 put out from Constantza at 1600 for Ivan Baba.

1315 U 18 put out from Sevastopol under anti-mine escort of motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 for operations in the Ghelenjik-Tuapse operational area. After leaving U 18 at point SS 1, the motor minesweepers checked coastal route Brown as far as Cape Takil with oropesa gear.

Repeated aerial minelaying in the Danube is endangering supplies and it is therefore vital to establish a degaussing installation in one of the Danube ports. When the installation in Braila was transferred to Constantza by orders of Naval Group South, I pointed out that the installation would be necessary on the Danube as soon as the enemy began minelaying in the estuary area. Transfer of Danube ships for necessary degaussing is not desirable, especially in view of the time which would be wasted. On the other hand, the installation in Constantza is absolutely necessary.

I requested Group Command to apply to Naval High Command for the establishment of a degaussing

installation in Braila, at the same time maintaining the installation in Constantza. This measure would also serve to relieve the installation in Constantza which is always overworked.

2000 Naval ferry barge F 401, naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk for the patrol line.

3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla reported from Mariupol that naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 would be operational again at 0000 on 4 July.

I propose to have the enemy positions east of Taganrog and the village of Varenovka shelled by the naval gunnery lighters stationed in Mariupol. The bombardment should take place at dawn from the flanks and the rear of the enemy positions. I directed Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine to discuss the details necessary for the execution of this operation with Group Recknagel (Corps H.Q.). Moreover, I ordered that naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 should be employed primarily to escort Mariupol-Taganrog convoys and to destroy any enemy forces which might attack our convoys. With naval gunnery lighter No. 4, which is at present still lying in Temriuk, the convoy escorts should comprise 2 naval gunnery lighters at a time, while the other 2 are employed over the entire Bay of Taganrog in various patrol lines against enemy vessels. I intend to employ naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11, which have finished training in Sevastopol, to protect Temriuk Bay. To avoid chocking Temriuk harbor, 1 naval gunnery lighter will be stationed in Kerch as reserve.

As offensive operations for this group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, I at first planned a bombardment of the Protoka estuary (Achuevski) northeast of Temriuk and, later, a repetition of the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari.

Since, according to agents' reports, enemy landings are to be expected in Arabatzki Bay (possibly with simultaneous landings in Theodosia Bay from the south) with the aim of cutting off Kerch Peninsula, I shall have the naval gunnery lighters make a navigational training run off the north coast of Kerch Peninsula from Cape Kasantip as far as Akmanaya as soon as possible to prepare the boats for action against such enemy operations.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on convoys or naval forces. At night, Taganrog reported enemy penetrations

without bombing. Numerous bombs were dropped on Temriuk, no damage to naval installations.

At 2045 Kerch was bombed, but no damage was caused.

35 bombs landed on the town area of Novorossisk.

At 2245 the town area of Taganrog was shelled from Sambek: 9 rounds were fired.

In Novorossisk there was the usual shelling by heavy artillery.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: Check sweeps by the harbor defense flotilla.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear and the group with towed loop gear carried out a total of 8 sweeps on the route to the new fish-salting factory harbor (west). No mines were swept.

The harbor defense flotilla swept the same route for moored mines without result. Minesweeping planes swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait for ground mines. One mine was swept off Cape Sjuk. It exploded and one of the planes crashed. The plane was a total loss, but the crew was rescued.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 131 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges and put in to Kerch at 1815.

At 1815 convoy No. 132 put out from Kerch with 5 naval ferry barges and anchored off Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 2000 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 42 put in to Kerch on return passage.

At 1915 convoy No. 43 put out for Temriuk with 6 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1000 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 37 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges and, after unloading, commenced return passage to Genichesk at 1330.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. To relieve ferry traffic in Kerch Strait, a convoy ran from Theodosia to Taman and another from Taman to Theodosia again today.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1930 Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 2 vessels leaving Ghelenjik on a southerly course.

Owing to the weather, daylight air reconnaissance could only examine part of the Caucasus coast: at 0345 1 coastal vessel of some 400 tons and 2 patrol vessels, course northwest, 10 miles south of Ghelenjik.

Enemy shipping in Ghelenjik at 1010: 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, and several boats.

Sukhum at 1111: 2 freighters of 1,500 and 1,000 tons respectively, 2 coastal vessels and several boats. The other ports were not examined because of the weather.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

At 2340 night air reconnaissance detected 3 small vessels 5 miles south of Myshako.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no activity of heavy surface forces. Slight activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 1 in the northeastern Black Sea and 1 in an unidentified position.

Own Situation:

0005 For a short time at about 0005, Mariupol was shelled from the sea. About 25 rounds were fired. Neither the caliber of the shells nor the range was discovered, as the vessels were only momentarily caught by the searchlights. No damage.

0030 Taganrog reported artillery fire from the south coast of Taganrog Bay off Pavlo Ochakov. Twelve short rounds were fired, 1 hit was scored in the harbor area, no damage.

0020 E-boats S 28, S 42, S 46 and S 102 put in to Ivan Baba (see War Diary 3 July).

At 0430 S 72 put in from Constantza.

0400 At 0400 naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. Nothing to report.

0810 Motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 put in to Kerch after sweeping the coastal route from Cape Takil Sarich to Cape Takil with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant. No mines were swept. From 2230 to 2300 between Sudak and Alushta, the boats heard Russian telephony traffic, signal strength 5 on 3,100 kc/s. The vessels were not sighted.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: W - NW winds, force 4, thunderstorms in the afternoon, cloudy, visibility 20 miles.

As the wind was expected to abate during the night, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the operation which had been ordered on the night of 3/4 July. U 18 which was on outward passage to the Ghelenjik-Tuapse operational area was informed of the operational order for the E-boats.

Owing to the continuous bad weather, this operation too had to be canceled in the evening.

Since enemy supply traffic proceeded very close to the Caucasus coast under cover of their heavy coastal batteries, the E-boats would have to take up lurking positions at noiseless and occasionally slight speed, if they were to have any prospect of success. Owing to the shortness of the nights, the same group would not be able to carry out attacks on 2 places off the coast in succession (e.g. the Vulan valley and the Mesib estuary) because they would always lose time in withdrawing from the coast to proceed unobserved from one position to the other. I therefore consider it right to make surprise sorties only, with only one group operating each night.

By order of Group Command, all the flotillas were instructed that the taking of prisoners was extremely important in any engagements with enemy naval forces.

In view of the situation in the Genichesk-Temriuk supply traffic, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus requested the immediate transfer from Sevastopol to Genichesk of naval ferry barges F 418 and F 419 which belong to the 5th Landing Craft Flotilla. I at once ordered Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast to send the 2 naval ferry barges out with cargo as soon as naval ferry barges F 445 and F 446, which were proposed as replacement, had completed their training to enable them to assume the previous defense tasks of F 418 and F 419.

In answer to my inquiry induced by the imminent visit of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, Group Command reported the decision of Commander-in-Chief, Navy according to which sea transportation in the Black Sea is to be the responsibility of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping. According to this decision, the Reich Commissioner is entitled to dispose freely of the available tonnage. Commander, Sea Transportation will still be responsible for supplies transported by naval vessels.

I understand from this communication that the distribution of naval vessels in supply traffic (e.g. naval ferry barges) will remain the task of the Navy alone. Moreover, I think that although the Reich Commissioner is in complete charge of civil freight space (distribution, loading and unloading), he will however have no influence over the organization, composition or defense of military convoys.

1930 Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats put out from Mariupol for the reconnaissance line.

2000 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 is today ready to proceed after the installation of a new 8.8 cm. gun in Sevastopol. The ship has been ordered to put out for Kerch on 5 July to provide navigational assistance for naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11. The formation should arrive off Cape Takil at dawn on 6 July and, if the weather prevents through-passage, they are to put in to Yalta or Theodosia.

Enemy Air Activity:

No naval forces or convoys were attacked. At 0057 3 bombs were dropped on Mariupol, causing no damage. A few planes flew over Taganrog at night without bombing it. At 0540 some 20 bombs were dropped on the town and harbor of Novorossisk. There was also artillery bombardment of the northern part of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

Kerch Strait: Minesweeping planes swept the Kerch-Temriuk route for ground mines. No mines swept. The groups with skid gear and towed loop gear did not operate. For the first time in weeks, Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus again ordered boats of the harbor defense flotilla to

watch for minelaying from the air at night.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled. Transportation by the rope railway increased. It is planned to carry 500 tons on 5 July.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 135 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges. In the evening, convoy No. 136 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges and anchored off Cape Takil. Naval ferry barge F 476 ran aground there and is to be towed off on 5 July.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 43 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter and commenced return passage to Kerch at 1430.

At 1200 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 37 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges.

Convoy No. 38 is proceeding to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

At 2000 the return Taganrog-Mariupol convoy, comprising 2 tugs, 1 lighter, 3 transport cutters and 2 harbor defense boats, put out from Taganrog.

CONFIDENTIAL

5 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2215 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 1 vessel proceeding from Cape Doob to the beachhead and between 2200 and 2300 7 vessels between landing points 2 and 3.

Daylight air reconnaissance: at 1012 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 1 torpedoboat, 3 motor minesweepers and 1 patrol vessel, course northwest, off Tuapse; at 1021 1 coastal vessel, course northwest, and 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, 20 miles northwest of Sochi; 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, 15 miles northwest of Sochi.

Owing to clouds, the ports were only partially reconnoitered.

Ghelenjik at 0955 (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 2 motor minesweepers, 11 M.T.B.s, 40 small boats and 1 coastal vessel putting out; 1 motor minesweeper off the harbor.

Tuapse at 1012 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 10 coastal vessels totaling 3,000 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 11 M.T.B.s, 1 small armed vessel and 20 small boats.

Poti (aerial photograph unclear because the area was partially covered by clouds): battleship "Parishkaya Kommuna", 2 heavy cruisers, 3 destroyers, 6 submarines, 3 motor minesweepers, 12 M.T.B.s, 2 hulls of "Kirov"-class cruisers, 1 tanker of 7,000 tons, 1 hulk of 8,500 tons, 1 freighter of 5,000 tons, 3 freighters, each 4,000 tons, 1 freighter of 3,000 tons, 3 freighters, each 1,500 tons, 5 freighters, each 1,000 tons, 1 tanker lighter of 500 tons, 16 coastal vessels totaling 5,000 tons, 1 floating dock, 2 floating cranes and 50 boats.

Ports on the Sea of Azov:

Yeisk at 0707 (aerial photograph): 3 motor gunboats.
Primorsko Akhtari at 0625 (aerial photograph): 4 motor gunboats.
Enemy ships in the fisheries showed little change.
No enemy traffic at sea.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported slight activity of small vessels. No heavy surface

forces were located. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea and 1 in the east coast area.

Own Situation:

0042 Two enemy M.T.B.s were sighted from Anapa 1 mile off the coast. After shelling, the boats made off to the west behind a smoke screen.

0315 Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats put in to Mariupol from the patrol line. No incidents. At 0315 naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 put in to Taganrog with escort.

0400 Temriuk reported no incidents in the patrol line off Temriuk Bay (naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats). No air activity.

0500 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 put out from Sevastopol for Kerch with mine-exploding vessel No. 192. On arrival at Kerch, it was proposed that the group of naval gunnery lighters should continue passage to Temriuk on 7 July for offensive operations and defense duty in the Sea of Azov. Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, which has up to now been stationed in Temriuk, should be transferred at the same time to Mariupol.

As the weather deteriorated, the formation put in to Yalta at 1330. Further passage was proposed for 6 July.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: N - NW winds, force 2 - 3, increasing in the afternoon with sea wind, cloudy, local thunderstorms, visibility 20 miles.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to repeat the operation close to the Caucasus coast during the coming night. This operation had been canceled on the night of 4/5 July because of the weather. In view of U 18's presence, anti-submarine operations were forbidden. U 18 was informed of the E-boat flotilla's operation. At 1700 4 boats put out from Ivan Baba.

Two boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to carry out anti-submarine operations between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil on the night of 5/6 July. The flotilla was informed of our own convoy traffic and of 1st E-Boat Flotilla's operation.

As the Rumanians are unable to keep the Danube fairway free from mines, Group Command suggested that the 2 ice-breakers "Widder" and "Delphin", which are at present being converted in Braila, should be made available for minesweeping in that area. I pointed out that these vessels were primarily ice-breakers and had only been converted into tugs with towed loop gear for use during the summer months. The 2 vessels belong to 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and are urgently required in Kerch Strait, since, apart from mine-exploding vessel No. 192, only motor fishing vessels and D-boats (some of which are incapable of towing gear) are available there and their employment depends substantially on the weather. Even when acknowledging the importance of sweeping the Danube fairway, we cannot underestimate the need for minesweeping in Kerch Strait for the safe passage of supplies to the front. For temporary relief on the Danube, I proposed to have tug "Delphin" remain there, at the latest until the icing-up of Kerch Strait. I also intend to point out to the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping during his visit that it will be necessary to detail suitable vessels for the Danube as a permanent arrangement.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported that the section of the net barrage for Anapa would be transferred on 5 and 6 July. Tug "Höflein" was to carry out this task, joining the normal Anapa convoys.

As tugs "Habicht" and "Reni" which are available in Mariupol are not powerful enough for the towed convoy traffic from Mariupol to Taganrog, I directed Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to transfer a stronger tug to Mariupol as soon as possible. He then reported that tug "Rheinkontor" would be transferred to Mariupol on 7 July.

At 1200 and 1500 respectively, Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 4 put in to Constantza from anti-submarine operations off Constantza. Enemy not sighted.

From today, Naval Port Commander, Kerch will send out 6 Russian motor fishing vessels each night to watch for minelaying from the air on the supply routes north of Kerch Strait. The boats put out at 1645.

At 2000 naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty. Deputy Naval Port Commander, Temriuk was aboard F 401.

At 2000 naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats put out from Mariupol for the reconnaissance line off Mariupol.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air raids on naval forces or convoys. Some planes flew over Crimean ports and 6 bombs were dropped in the vicinity of Ivan Baba. Planes penetrated to Taganrog at night without bombing. Nine bombs were dropped on harbor sites at Novorossisk and there was the usual artillery fire on the harbor sites and the town area.

Minesweeping Activity:

Minesweeping in Kerch Strait was carried out according to plan. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 135 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges. Naval ferry barge F 476 which had run aground off Cape Takil was towed off.

At 1645 convoy No. 134 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and tug "Höflein" which was to lay the net barrage at Anapa.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1920 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 44 put out for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1530 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 38 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. After unloading, the vessels commenced return passage to Genichesk at 1900.

d. Taganrog Bay:

At 0315 a convoy of 10 transport cutters, escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 and 1 harbor defense boat, put in to Taganrog.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance, flown in medium visibility, reported the following vessels off the Caucasus coast: at 0615 1 freighter of 1,500 tons and 2 motor minesweepers, course southeast, 5 miles west of Gagri; at 0658 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 10 miles south of Sukhum; at 0700 1 coastal vessel and 2 boats, lying stopped, 20 miles west of Ochemchiri.

Enemy shipping in port:

Sukhum at 0644 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 2 coastal vessels and 15 boats.

Ochemchiri at 0651 (aerial photograph): the 2 submarine tenders of 1,000 and 2,000 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, 8 submarines, 9 motor minesweepers and 10 small boats. The other ports were not reconnoitered owing to the weather.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

At 0405 a BV 138 reported that it had attacked a surfaced submarine with 3 bombs and 2 depth charges 9 miles southeast of Cape Tarkhankutzki. One hit was observed on the bows and then an oil track appeared. There was no further proof of her destruction.

Lively steamer traffic was again observed in the southwestern Black Sea within Turkish territorial waters.

By radio monitoring, Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected 1 cruiser or destroyer at sea in the Sochi area. Normal traffic of small vessels and activity of patrol vessels off the east coast. Submarines detected: 3 in the eastern Black Sea and the Crimean coast area.

Own Situation:

0225 U 19 was ordered to put in to Theodosia and, on return passage, to attack any vessels sighted. On the basis of the air reconnaissance reports, she was ordered to give particular attention to the supply routes close to the coast.

0310 Naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats put in to Mariupol from the reconnaissance line in Taganrog Bay. Enemy not observed.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty off the Kuban estuary. Nothing to report. The boats employed on mine observation for the first time on the Kerch-Temriuk route put in to Kerch at 0740.

0400 E-boats S 501 and S 503 put in to Theodosia from anti-submarine operations in the Cape Chauda-Cape Takil area. Nothing to report.

0710 From 2320 to 0050, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were in lurking positions off the Vulan valley. At 0045 they attacked an escorted convoy of lighters. S 28 sank a lighter of 800 tons, S 47 one of 500 tons and S 40 one of 400 tons. All the lighters were sunk by torpedoes. The escort vessels' defense was ineffective. Observation of the enemy and efficiency of our weapons were considerably impaired by a strong westerly swell. Guns could hardly be used at all. On return passage, the boats had a short engagement with an enemy motor gunboat in air grid square 7553. S 28 scored several hits on the enemy boat. Aboard S 47, 1 man was slightly wounded by enemy gunfire and 1 engine broke down. The effect of the hits on the enemy boat was not observed as she disappeared at high speed on reverse course. At 0710 the boats put in to Ivan Baba.

I sent a message to 1st E-Boat Flotilla expressing my acknowledgment of the boats' successes despite unfavorable weather.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: W winds, force 3, increasing to force 4 - 5 with sea wind in the afternoon, fair, local thunderstorms, visibility 20 miles.

The presence of a cruiser or destroyer at sea did not induce me to take any special measures.

For reasons laid down in War Diary 4 July, 4 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate against the enemy supply traffic off the Mesib estuary and Myshako on the night of 6/7 July. Anti-submarine operations were prohibited because U 18 was in the same area. At 1700 4 boats put out from Ivan Baba. At 2100 S 72 had to return because 1 engine broke down.

At 1900 S 51 put out for Constantza to have her center engine changed.

I could not agree to the request of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea for the temporary allocation of the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla for convoy protection, because on 7 July the Crimea group and 1st E-Boat Flotilla are scheduled for an operation against the Myshako beachhead. The task was to sweep the Sevastopol-Cape Tarkhankutzki route for a convoy due to pass on 7 July. I have instead placed at his disposal 2 boats of 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla and Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported the results of the examination of the boats of 19th Harbor Defense Flotilla which I had arranged (see War Diary 3 July). They are not sufficiently seaworthy to watch for mine-laying off the Sulina estuary. Sea Transportation Office, Braila was directed to try to procure other suitable vessels.

1345 Anapa convoy No. 134 was bombed and machine-gunned by 8 ground attack planes southeast of Cape Zhelezni Rog. Our fighters prevented the enemy from making a low-level attack and the bombs were consequently dropped from high altitudes. Three 8 kg. bombs hit the hold of naval ferry barge F 374. Casualties: 1 man seriously wounded, 3 men slightly wounded. Both F 374 and F 536 will be unfit for operations for about 2 days.

An unsuccessful attempt was made today to tow off RO 14 of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Ochakov which ran aground near Tendra. Attempts to salvage her will be continued.

1730 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 11 and mine-exploding vessel No. 192 anchored in Theodosia roads on passage from Yalta. At 1930 they continued passage to Kerch.

1800 Reichstatthalter Kauffmann, the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, and his advisors visited me to discuss the transfer of authority for sea transportation.

In this discussion, the Reich Commissioner confirmed my opinion (see War Diary 4 July) of the future distribution of responsibility in sea transportation.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk on

coastal defense duty. The mine observation boats put out from Kerch at 1610 for the Kerch-Temriuk supply route. The reconnaissance line off Mariupol was occupied by naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the above-mentioned attack on Anapa convoy No. 134, there was not much enemy air activity.

Seven ground attack planes dropped 12 bombs on the southern sector of Novorossisk. There was the usual artillery fire on the sites at the east harbor and the southern sector.

At 0445 6 bombs were dropped on Ivan Baba from an altitude of 4,000 meters, causing no damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

After minesweeping off Sulina, Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported route Green free of mines to a width of 200 meters on both sides of the line of buoys. Minesweeping will be continued with the aim of widening the route to 400 meters on each side.

Sevastopol: The harbor defense flotilla with towed loop gear swept the area off the entrance to Sevastopol without result.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear swept the new route to the winter harbor eight times and minesweeping planes searched for ground mines between the northern entrance to Kerch Strait and Temriuk. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 134 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges and tug "Höflein" which was taking the net barrage to Anapa. For air raid on this convoy, see above.

At 1815 convoy No. 135 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges and anchored off Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 0930 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 44 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and

1 lighter. After unloading, the vessels commenced return passage and put in to Kerch at 2300.

At 1830 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 38 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1120 convoy No. 39, comprising naval ferry barges only, put out for Genichesk.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

At 1440 6 transport cutters, escorted by 2 harbor defense boats, put out for Taganrog.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2200 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 8 vessels off landing point 3. They were driven off by our coastal guns. According to observations during the last few days, the enemy mainly uses landing points 5 (Cape Suchuk) and 4 (Myshako estuary). Since 10 May, no transshipment has been detected in Zemmeskaya Bay northwest of Cape Suchuk.

At 0627 daylight air reconnaissance sighted 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0640 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, south of Sochi; at 1810 1 convoy, comprising 1 freighter of 800 tons, 1 freighter of 600 tons, 3 minesweepers and 1 coastal vessel, course north, 5 miles northwest of Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0818: 7 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, 3 motor minesweepers, 18 M.T.B.s and 50 small vessels.

Tuapse at 0630: 12 coastal vessels totaling 3,400 tons, 6 motor minesweepers, 13 M.T.B.s and 20 small boats.

Sochi at 0747 (aerial photograph): 3 motor minesweepers, 1 coastal vessel and 15 small boats. The other ports were not reconnoitered owing to the weather.

No reconnaissance was flown in the Sea of Azov because of the weather.

Many large freighters, proceeding in both directions, were again detected off the Turkish coast.

At 2310 night air reconnaissance located 3 ships, course northeast, 15 miles southeast of Ghelenjik.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no large surface vessels at sea. Normal activity of small vessels. A surprisingly high number of submarines was detected: 5 in the western Black Sea as far as the Crimean coast and 2 in the east coast area. Another submarine was

sighted by a reconnaissance plane 10 miles south of Cape Sarich off the southern tip of the Crimea.

Own Situation:

At 2307 and 2350 on the night of 6/7 July, our batteries near Mariupol were shelled twice from the sea. The impacts hit the water close to the coast. From the various directions of the gun-fire, there seemed to be 3 vessels involved.

0321 Eupatoria reported that southeast of Cape Tarkhankutzki a surfaced submarine had fired 3 torpedoes at the "Varna", "Ardeal" convoy which was proceeding from Constantza to Sevastopol. No hits were scored. Destroyer "Marasesti" attacked the submarine with depth charges and probably damaged her. Gunboat "Stihi" was left at the spot for further observation. She obtained no proof of the submarine's destruction.

Four enemy planes later attacked the same convoy off Cape Lukull. Destroyer "Marasesti" shot down 1 enemy plane and Rumanian fighters accounted for 2 more.

0430 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. Apart from enemy air activity including bombing of the patrol line, there were no incidents.

0525 Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 put in to Kerch from Theodosia.

The naval gunnery lighters were ordered to bombard fishery Achuevski at the Protoka estuary on the night of 8/9 July (see Appendix). Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla with motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 will be in command. The boats' primary task is the destruction of enemy vessels and they have orders to alter target to any vessels which put out from the Protoka estuary. The bombardment should be carried out at dawn.

0615 E-boats S 42, S 46 and S 47 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. The landing place at the Mesib estuary could not be attacked because of fog off the coast and a searchlight barrage. No enemy traffic was observed from lurking positions close to the coast 10 miles south of the Mesib estuary.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light variable winds freshening with sea wind in the afternoon.

fair to cloudy, morning fog, throughout the day visibility 20 miles.

On the night of 7/8 July, I propose to carry out simultaneous operations against enemy supply traffic in 3 areas. In addition to the 8 operational boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, I intend also to employ the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla.

I therefore issued the following orders:

1. With motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 and 1 boat of 1st E-Boat Flotilla which should be equipped with a 4 cm. gun, Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla will attack enemy traffic and landing places near Myshako with guns and, if possible, torpedoes.

2. Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla will operate against enemy supply traffic off the Vulan valley southeast of Ghelenjik.

3. Three more boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla will operate against enemy supply traffic off the Dzhubg estuary northwest of Tuapse and against any vessels lying off the river mouths.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to occupy a patrol line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil at least 8 miles off the coast on the night of 7/8 July.

All flotillas involved were informed of the various approach routes and times at which other formations would be approaching.

The groups will use the same radio frequency to enable cooperation when the enemy is sighted. This will also ensure that I can intervene at any time with orders.

1316 Ten planes, in 2 waves, machine-gunned and bombed Anapa convoy No. 135 southeast of Zhelezni Rog. 70 medium bombs and many small bombs were dropped. The planes attacked from an altitude of 400 meters, approaching at high altitudes with the sun behind them. They were driven off by anti-aircraft fire from all the naval ferry barges. No damage or casualties, no planes shot down.

1350 U 19 put in to Theodosia from operations.

U 23 reported that she had attacked a patrol vessel of 500 tons in air grid square 0346 at 0735. A fan-of-two torpedoes missed the target.

1400 The Air Force bombed an enemy submarine off Cape Sarich. An underwater explosion was observed after the bombing and the Air Force believes that the submarine was destroyed.

1600 Three motor fishing vessels put out from Kerch for the minelaying observation position.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk for the patrol line.

Enemy Air Activity:

In addition to the above-mentioned attacks on our convoys, enemy attacks on the ports were also much heavier. Night attacks were made on Kerch and Taganrog, but no damage was caused. At 0600 5 planes attacked Yalta. Naval ferry barge F 144 was seriously damaged by a bomb which landed on her port side and she had to be beached. Tug "Baikal" was slightly damaged. After a direct hit, motor fishing vessel WM 5001 sank. The building of Naval Port Commander's harbor guard was damaged. Casualties: 2 men killed and 3 men seriously wounded. At 1625 14 planes attacked Theodosia in 3 waves. 50-60 medium bombs were dropped on the harbor basin and the harbor area from an altitude of 3,000 - 3,500 meters. Damage: Harbor defense boat No. 2207 was destroyed by a direct hit. Naval ferry barge F 419 was slightly damaged above the water-line and, among other things, the vessel's degaussing equipment was destroyed. The rudder of lighter No. 1245 was badly damaged. A direct hit lifted a Russian submarine chaser from the slip and badly damaged her. S 507 was slightly damaged by splinters. A pontoon of the Net Barrage Group was seriously damaged, the branch office of Naval Fitting-out Depot was badly damaged and there was slight fire damage in Construction Office No. 2. Quay walls and 2 goods wagons were damaged in the harbor. Casualties: 1 naval rating killed and 10 naval personnel wounded; 1 man killed and 1 wounded from the civilian crew of a lighter.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: Check sweeps by boats of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Sevastopol and of 17th Harbor Defense Flotilla were without result.

Kerch Strait: The route to the winter harbor was again swept by the group with skid gear and mine-exploding vessel No. 192. No mines swept. The channel for cables from Pavlovski to the fish-salting factory was swept by the harbor defense

flotilla. Minesweeping planes swept for ground mines in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait. No mines swept. According to a report from Commander, 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, all boats of the group of motor minesweepers (FR), which were equipped with motor generators, broke down with the exception of one. Quick repairs have been arranged.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident. A drop of 400 tons in the transportation performance can be expected on 8 July due to delay in unloading a lighter in Taman.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 135 ran as scheduled with 7 naval ferry barges. (For air raid, see above.) At 1645 convoy No. 136 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges and proceeded to Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 44 ran as scheduled. One lighter sprang a leak when she collided with a wreck in Temriuk.

At 1850 convoy No. 45 put out from Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters.

At 1300 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 39 put in to Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges and, after unloading, commenced return passage to Genichesk at 1430.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

At 2000 10 transport cutters, escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 and 1 harbor defense boat, put out from Taganrog for Mariupol.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. For enemy attacks, see above.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2250 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 10 vessels off landing points 3 and 5. The 8 vessels which were reported by Naval Port Commander at 2200 on 7 July were forced to turn about by our coastal guns. A loud explosion was heard and, on the morning of 8 July, a wreck of a vessel was sighted 1.5 miles southeast of the landing points. In all probability, the vessel struck a mine in our minefield south of Cape Suchuk while turning off.

Daylight air reconnaissance off the Caucasus coast was difficult because of the weather. At 0927 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, course southeast, was observed off Adler. No further enemy traffic was sighted.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 24 M.T.B.s, 5 small armed vessels and 50 boats.

Tuapse at 0828 (aerial photograph): 10 coastal vessels totaling 3,200 tons, 4 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s, 2 small armed vessels and 20 boats. The other ports were only partially examined owing to the weather and no vessels of importance were sighted.

At 0855 1 small vessel, course southwest, was sighted in the Sea of Azov 15 miles northeast of Temriuk. No further enemy traffic was detected.

Enemy shipping in the ports on the Sea of Azov:

Yeisk at 1113 (aerial photograph): 6 small armed vessels (motor gunboats), 1 probable M.T.B. and 25 boats.

Primorsko Akhtari (aerial photograph): 3 motor gunboats and 90 boats. No vessels of interest at the fisheries.

Slight traffic of Turkish freighters off the Turkish coast.

Night reconnaissance was not flown because of the weather.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no activity of heavy surface forces. Normal activity of small vessels. Seven submarines were again detected in radio traffic, 3 of them in the western Black Sea and the Crimean area.

Own Situation:

0030 At 0030 6 miles southwest of Taganrog, one of our harbor defense boats was shelled by 2 enemy vessels using 4.5 cm. guns. The vessels were not identified. No hits were scored.

0500 Mariupol reported that 2 enemy planes attacked our Taganrog convoy 7 miles west of Krivaya Kossa. No damage.

0340 E-boats S 501, S 503 and S 505 put in to Theodosia from the reconnaissance line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. No enemy forces were sighted.

0400 Temriuk reported no incidents in the patrol line off the Kuban estuary (naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 13 boats). Slight enemy air activity.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: S winds, force 2 - 3, increasing to force 5 - 6 with sea wind in the afternoon, fair in the forenoon, thundery squalls in the afternoon, visibility 20 miles, wind veering in a clockwise direction and decreasing in the evening.

1130 E-boat S 40 and motor minesweepers R 33 and R 166 put in to Kerch from their operation against the Myshako beachhead. The motor minesweepers shelled the jetties. After being driven back twice by a patrol vessel, S 40 fired a fan-of-two torpedoes at a convoy proceeding to the northwest. Both torpedoes missed the target. About 10 enemy patrol vessels were encountered off Myshako and, with the enemy medium coastal batteries, they prevented the boats from approaching close to the coast.

When making off, S 40 rammed R 33 at high speed. The 2 boats were considerably damaged, but continued return passage to Kerch under their own steam at a speed of 7 knots.

In 2 groups, each consisting of 3 boats, 1st E-Boat Flotilla lay in wait off the Vulan valley and the Dzhubg valley. The group which was off Dzhubg met considerable haze and fog close to

the coast and did not sight the enemy. On return passage, S 102 struck a mine on route Brown 6 miles southeast of Zhelezni Rog just off point 19. The water was 18 meters deep. While being towed to port, the boat sank in 45° 4.5' N, 36° 42.5' E. Casualties: chief electrician's mate, 2 non-commissioned officers of the technical branch and 5 sailors killed and the rest of the crew slightly wounded.

As 1st E-Boat Flotilla reported a column of water 200 - 300 meters high when the mine exploded, it was probably a moored mine. As a result, route Brown was closed and Anapa traffic diverted via the new coastal route. Anapa convoys will run with anti-mine escort provided by motor minesweepers (FR). Motor minesweepers (FR) and (RA) were ordered to sweep route Brown.

Anapa radar station located enemy vessels off the coast near Anapa three times between 2100 and 2300. As enemy minelaying was suspected there too, I ordered the next Anapa convoys to run with anti-mine escort.

In their lurking positions off the Vulan valley and in the operations against the enemy vessels reported by night reconnaissance off Cape Idokopas, the boats of the second group of 1st E-Boat Flotilla did not sight the enemy. On return passage, the group protected S 40 and motor minesweeper R 33 as far as Cape Takil. At 1100 the boats put in to Ivan Baba.

In the course of the reorganization of formations of the Danube Flotilla, 30th Escort Flotilla was set up in accordance with the plan which I proposed to Group South. Flotilla commander: Lieutenant Commander (Reserve) Basarke. Base: Odessa.

The commander of U 19 reported that, during the last operation, no merchant traffic was observed in the Batum area apart from a freighter which was proceeding from Trabzon to Poti. Both by day and by night, observation was very difficult because of a coastal haze. Regular air patrol with many MBR 2 planes. Less air and sea patrols were encountered in the Cape Pitsunda area, but enemy planes were more numerous again to the north as far as Tuapse. No surface or underwater locations were obtained. Depth setting of depth charges was observed to be no deeper than 50 - 60 meters.

At 1915 U 19 commenced return passage from Theodosia to Constantza. Close to the Crimean coast, the boat searched for the reported enemy submarines.

1435 At 1435, in a low-level attack, 6 IL 2 planes dropped some 15 bombs on Anapa convoy No. 136 10 miles southeast of Zhelezni Rog. No hits were scored, no damage. Naval ferry barge F 372 shot down 1 plane.

1500 Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla put out from Kerch with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10, 11 and motor minesweeper R 166 to shell Achuevski fishery harbor.

At 1630 4 mine observation boats put out from Temriuk. Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 15 boats put out from Temriuk at 1945 for coastal defense duty.

The Mariupol-Taganrog reconnaissance line was occupied by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea closed the shipping routes off Tendra because of suspected minelaying.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the above-mentioned attacks on our convoys, individual planes penetrated over Berdyansk without dropping any bombs. At 1100 5 P 2 planes dropped some 30 medium bombs on Ivan Baba from an altitude of 4,000 meters. No damage or casualties.

Nine bombs were dropped on the center of Novorossisk and the sites at the east harbor. There was also the usual artillery and mortar fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: Route Green was swept eight times with towed loop gear north of the approach buoy. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: The group with skid gear checked the route to the new winter harbor and the harbor defense flotilla searched for moored mines in the cable channel from Pavlovski to the fish-salting factory. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran without incident. Today for the first time, coal transports which had already repeatedly run from Berdyansk to Kerch for the naval units in the Crimea proceeded direct to Taman, while the Army coal transports ran from the

Crimea to the Gotenkopf bridgehead. Thus the ferry performance of the Navy to the bridgehead was increased by 800 tons and the double transshipment in Kerch was avoided.

Since Sea Transportation Office, Kerch has repeatedly reported in the last few days that the scheduled transportation figures could not be maintained owing to insufficient unloading facilities in Taman and Senaya, I pointed out to Army Group A that the prescribed daily figures could only be maintained and the enforced drop in tonnage balanced if the vessels could be turned round in less time by speeding up loading and unloading.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 136 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. (For air raid, see above.)

At 1820 convoy No. 137 put out from Kerch as far as Cape Takil with 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 0930 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 45 put in to Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters and, after unloading, returned to Kerch.

At 1230 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 39 put in to Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges.

At 1450 convoy No. 40 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter.

d. Crimea convoys ran as scheduled.

As motor sailing vessel "Engerau" and 2 naval ferry barges ran aground off Pavlovski, Theodosia-Taman convoy No. 22 put in to Taman 6 hours late.

The Sevastopol-Odessa towed convoy was diverted to Sulina because of suspected minelaying and the closing of the route off Tendra (see above).

CONFIDENTIAL

9 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 2320 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 11 transport vessels and escort vessels off landing points 3 and 6 near Myshako.

Daylight air reconnaissance was impeded by the weather. No traffic was observed owing to cloud. Only the ports of Ghelenjik and Sochi were reconnoitered:

Ghelenjik at 0831 (aerial photograph): 9 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, 7 motor minesweepers, 32 M.T.B.s and some 20 small boats.

Sochi at 0801 (aerial photograph): 1 coastal vessel, 2 motor minesweepers and some 20 small boats.

The surprising increase in the number of M.T.B.s in Ghelenjik during the last few days - today, with 32 boats, approximately half of the enemy operational boats in the Black Sea - leads me to expect intensified enemy operations close to the Taman coast e.g. minelaying operations or torpedo operations against Anapa convoys and other convoys close to the southern Crimean coast. The enemy will probably also increase their patrols of the north Caucasus coast to protect their supply traffic there.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. At 0555 in the Protoka estuary, numerous fires were detected ashore after today's bombardment of Achuevski by the 2nd group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla (naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 - 11).

There was much less traffic in Turkish territorial waters today. Only 1 towed convoy was sighted.

At 2353 night air reconnaissance located 2 coastal vessels off Ghelenjik; at 2300 3 M.T.B.s, course northwest, 8 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0025 2 small vessels off Tuapse; at 0102 1 probable submarine (possibly one of our own) 15 miles west of Cape Pitsunda and at 0210 3 M.T.B.s 6 miles northwest of Ghelenjik.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected no large surface forces by radio inference. Slight activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 4 in the Crimean area and 2 off the east coast.

Own Situation:

0000 Anapa reported that, shortly before midnight, 3 M.T.B.s or gunboats were sighted off Anapa 4 miles from the coast on a northerly course. When shelled with 8.8 cm. anti-aircraft guns, the boats put up a smoke screen and turned off to the west.

These observations together with the locations of Anapa radar station (see War Diary 8 July) induced me to order anti-mine escort by 2 motor minesweepers (RA) for Anapa convoys on 10 July. Today's Anapa convoy will be escorted by 2 motor minesweepers (FR). The traffic will run via the new coastal route; when minesweeping is completed, the old route Brown will be used only as a secondary route.

0108 The coast 4 km. west of Berdyansk was shelled by 2 enemy vessels using approximately 7.5 cm. guns. After only 6 rounds, the boats made off.

0745 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 10 put in to Temriuk after bombarding Achuevski. Motor minesweeper R 166 with naval gunnery lighter No. 11 continued passage to Kerch, putting in at 1330.

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 under the command of Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla on board motor minesweeper R 166 were in attacking positions some 2,500 meters off the coast ready to begin the bombardment at dawn at 0242. The enemy did not detect the formation as it approached. At 0242 the boats opened fire. The bombardment lasted 1 hour and 2 minutes, allowing the boats first to lie stopped for about 15 minutes and thus achieve very good results. Out of some 10 vessels sighted off the coast, 3 were sunk and 3 more were totally destroyed by ship's guns. The latter 3 vessels did not sink because they ran aground after the shelling. Among the destroyed vessels were 2 motor gunboats similar to those used by the enemy for coastal defense in the Black Sea.

The bombardment caused 8 large fires and several small fires on the shore, 3 in the village of Achuevski and 5 among the shore installations. Continuous explosions and thick, black smoke clouds developed from a large fire which was still observed on the horizon at 0500. Probably, a large fuel depot had caught fire. 15 minutes after we opened fire, the enemy coastal guns opened up and steadily increased their fire. Three batteries of 4.5 cm. guns and 1 or 2 batteries of 8.8 cm. guns were observed. After they found the range, the enemy fire was

remarkably accurate. Our casualties: Aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 8, 2 men were killed, while 1 man was wounded aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 9 and another aboard motor minesweeper R 166. All the boats were slightly damaged but were still able to proceed. Ammunition used: 910 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells, 102 rounds of 3.7 cm. shells and an unknown number of 2 cm. shells. Return passage was without incident.

Thus, on their first operation, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 bombarded Achuevski under the command of the experienced Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and were very successful.

On putting in to Temriuk, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla reported the following boats non-operational for a short time: naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 10 owing to engine trouble and naval gunnery lighter No. 9 owing to temporary breakdown of the 2 8.8 cm. guns (failure in the recoil cylinders). I therefore ordered naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 10 to transfer to Kerch for dockyard repairs. Naval gunnery lighter No. 9 was also to proceed to Kerch if her guns could not be repaired on board (warrant ordnance officer of Naval Ordnance Arsenal, Kerch had been sent to Temriuk). Contrary to former orders, naval gunnery lighter No. 4 will have to remain in Temriuk until 1 naval gunnery lighter of the 2nd group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla is ready to operate in the patrol line.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light variable winds, freshening with sea wind in the afternoon, fair, cloudy in the afternoon, visibility by day 10 miles, deteriorating at night to 4 - 6 miles in the vicinity of the coast.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ivan Baba were ordered to operate against enemy traffic close to the Caucasus coast between Cape Idokopas and Tuapse on the night of 9/10 July. Depending on the decision of the group commander taken according to local conditions, the operation should be carried out in close formation or in 2 groups. Outward and return passage on direct course south of the enemy declared areas off the southern entrance to Kerch Strait.

1630 Four boats put out for the operation.

11th E-Boat Flotilla, Theodosia was ordered to dispose 3 boats in patrol line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil in the coming night. The flotilla was informed of our own convoy traffic.

At 2040 S 502, 503 and 505 put out for the operation.

1st E-Boat Flotilla reported that, after temporary repair of the damage incurred in the collision (see War Diary 8 July), S 40 could probably be transferred to Constantza for repairs on 20 July.

From the operational area, U 23 reported that she had had to withdraw temporarily from the coast because of the strong air patrol. The boat was ordered to operate on coastal routes again as soon as possible.

Approximate U-boat positions: U 18 in air grid square 8420 at 0800, U 23 in air grid square 9480 and U 19 in air grid square 3580 (return passage).

U 20 which will be ready for operations on 11 July received the following operational order: Outward passage via the northern route, using every opportunity to attack enemy submarines. Then a short operation of 3 - 4 days in the Ghelenjik-Tuapse area on enemy coastal supply routes. Further orders will be given according to the situation.

1st Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla was ordered to dispatch CB 1 and CB 4 to the training area south of Constantza from 10 - 12 July for anti-submarine operations.

At 2310 U 18 reported that she had 5 torpedoes left.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 16 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

No attacks on convoys or naval forces. Of the ports, only Novorossisk was attacked: 9 bombs were dropped on the southern part of the town and the southern sector and there was the usual artillery and mortar fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

The area off Sevastopol north of the approach buoy was swept four times with towed loop gear. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 searched for ground mines in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

Two motor minesweepers (FR) provided anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy No. 137 as ordered and later swept 4 Russian inertia contact mines in 45° 4.8' N, 36° 45' E on route Brown.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoy No. 137 ran as scheduled with 5 naval ferry barges.

At 1650 convoy No. 138 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1845 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 46 put out from Kerch with 5 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

At 1230 the Genichesk-Temriuk convoy put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter and, after unloading, commenced return passage to Genichesk at 1800.

Anapa and Temriuk convoys are at present impeded by the lack of operational naval ferry barges.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine was directed to provide an escort of 2 naval gunnery lighters for all convoys.

Today's Taganrog-Mariupol convoy did not run.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. The routes near Tendra are still closed.

The construction of breakwaters in the harbors in Kerch Strait, which was started at the end of March to protect supply convoys in the coming winter, is at a standstill. This fact induced me to send the following teletype:

"To Naval High Command, Naval Shore Construction Division, Naval Group South. Copy to Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval High Command, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Mines and Bases Section."

On 27 March, by order of Commanding Admiral, Black Sea, Naval Construction Directorate of Admiral, Black Sea applied to Naval High Command, Naval Shore Construction Division for the construction material necessary for breakwaters at the Kuban bridgehead. They requested labor and asked that a representative of Naval High Command should visit the area immediately. This application started a number of letters and teletypes, including a communication from Naval High Command to the main office of the Todt Organization in Berlin on 27 May containing a request for the execution of this construction work. In the middle of June, a representative of Armed Forces High Command made a local inspection and acknowledged that Naval High Command would require outside help for the completion of the project. On 5 June, Naval High Command, Naval Shore Construction Division reported that Professor Bruckmann of the Todt Organization Operational Staff (South) would carry out the project. However, in reply to an inquiry by telephone, Professor Bruckmann said that he could not undertake the work and that the main office of the Todt Organization in Berlin must have made a mistake.

Final result: This is a very important construction project. (The vital need of a second breakwater also became apparent and was immediately reported to Naval High Command.) In the hard winter months, the running of supplies to the Kuban bridgehead will partly depend on its completion. Again and again Construction Directorate of Admiral, Black Sea pressed the matter by teletype and telephone, but despite all efforts, the first request of Admiral, Black Sea, made on 27 March 1943, remains unanswered today, 9 July. The time has merely been used to fill out worthless forms and it is now doubtful whether the project can be even partly completed before the beginning of the bad weather. Thus we can expect that the Navy will again be unable to unload cargo in bad weather as was the case last winter.

Decision and arrangements for this urgent construction project are requested by return.

Admiral, Black Sea Serial No. G 17 757 BD."

CONFIDENTIAL

10 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1335 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 2 M.T.B.s putting out from Ghelenjik and at 1400 2 boats putting in. At 1920 25 vessels (tugs, lighters, minesweepers and patrol vessels) put out from Ghelenjik on a southerly course. At 2245 9 vessels were shelled off landing point 6.

In good visibility, daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum: at 1050 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, 6 miles south of Tuapse; at 1043 1 coastal vessel, course northwest, 10 miles northwest of Sochi; at 0955 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, 6 miles south of Sochi; at 0956 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast and 1 M.T.B., course northwest, 5 miles south of Ochemchiri.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik and Tuapse were not reconnoitered because of the strong fighter defenses.

Sochi at 1036: 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 10 motor minesweepers and 25 small boats. There were no vessels in Adler, Gagri or Gudauty.

Sukhum at 0945: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons with steam up, 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons, 1 torpedo-boat, 1 motor minesweeper, 1 gunboat and 25 small boats.

Ochemchiri at 0951: the 2 submarine tenders (2,000 and 1,000 tons), 8 submarines, 5 motor minesweepers, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, and 10 small boats. In Poti roads there was 1 freighter of 1,500 tons.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Night reconnaissance was impossible because of the weather. Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria did not locate any heavy surface forces. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines located: a total of 3 in the Crimean coast area and the eastern Black Sea, compared with 6 - 7 in the last few days.

Between 2100 and 2200, Anapa radar station again located 2 small vessels, probably M.T.B.s or gun-boats, off Anapa.

The increasing activity of small enemy vessels close to the Taman coast and the mines which are constantly being swept on the coastal route to Anapa probably indicate that the enemy intends to carry out increased minelaying operations against our supply traffic to Anapa. Naval gunnery lighters cannot be used to patrol the Taman coast against these enemy operations because they are too slow and are too dependent on the weather to be able to occupy fixed positions at sea. In the next few nights, I intend to employ the Crimea group of 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla along with 1st E-Boat Flotilla in the area between Kerch Strait and Anapa, allocating the boats to various positions.

Although the E-boats could remain at readiness in Anapa and the motor minesweepers operate alone in the patrol line, I rejected this measure since there would be no essential saving of working hours and it would only entail a reduction in the speed of the operation.

In view of the increasing enemy activity, I am going to enlarge the Crimea group of 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla to 5 boats whenever more boats become operational.

Own Situation:

0340 E-boats S 502, S 503 and S 505 put in to Theodosia from the reconnaissance line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil. Nothing was sighted.

0400 Temriuk reported that there had been no special incidents in the patrol line off the Kuban estuary.

0650 E-boats S 28, S 42, S 46 and S 47 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. The boats met no enemy traffic in their lurking positions between Tuapse and Olginskaya. At 0028 a torpedo was fired at a small patrol vessel, but it missed its target.

0735 Anapa reported that 10 IL 2 planes attacked Anapa convoy No. 138 9 miles south of Cape Zhelezni Rog. The planes ran in from astern at an altitude of 200 - 300 meters. Approximately 20 small to medium bombs were dropped and the boats were also machine-gunned. Two boats were slightly damaged by bomb-splinters and machine-gunfire. One man was wounded. It was difficult for the boats to defend themselves because they were proceeding in line ahead astern of the anti-mine escort. Successes: 1 plane shot down, another plane probably shot down. Fighters which intervened some time later shot down another plane.

0800 Nikolaiev reported that the first naval transport (No. 39) carried out her trials today on the River Bug.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: S winds, force 3 - 5, veering W - NW in the afternoon and increasing to force 5 - 6, cloudy, thundery squalls, visibility 6 - 10 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: S winds, force 4 - 6, veering W, force 5 - 6, thundery squalls, visibility 10 miles.

0900 U 19 put in to Constantza from operations. Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 4 which were on anti-submarine operations southeast of Constantza were informed of U 19's approach route.

From the operational area, U 18 reported that she had not encountered any traffic for the last 3 days. At 2324 the boat was pursued by 3 submarine chasers and she then transferred to the Tuapse-Ghelenjik area as ordered.

In reply to a query from Group Command, I reported today that the base of the Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla would be transferred to Sevastopol immediately the new Italian flotilla commander arrived in Constantza on 12 July. Operations would be discussed with him in Simferopol.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus reported from Kerch that the second part of the net barrage for Anapa would be transferred on 11 and 12 July with routine Anapa convoys.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 and tug "Delphin" of the FZ-group will be detailed to 30th Escort Flotilla for minesweeping on the Danube (see War Diary 5 July).

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4, naval ferry barge F 401 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty off the Kuban estuary.

Ivan Baba and Theodosia reported that 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas had not operated owing to the weather.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept route Green four times north of the approach buoy. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: 5 mines were swept by 4 motor minesweepers (2 (RA) and 2 (FR)) on the Anapa coastal route while they were acting as anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy No. 138. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to continue to provide Anapa convoys with anti-mine escort as far as Anapa.

Mine-exploding vessel No. 192 and a minesweeping plane swept the area north of Kerch Strait for ground mines. No mines swept. Motor minesweepers R 30, RA 52 and RA 54, which were to have been at operational readiness in Constantza on 1 July, should be transferred to Sevastopol as soon as possible.

Supply Traffic:

During the last few days, all the convoys to Temriuk, Taman and Anapa could not run owing to lack of operational naval ferry barges. At present, out of 60 naval ferry barges based in the Crimea, only 40 are operational, 4 are operational with limitations and 16 are non-operational. Since at least 48 fully operational naval ferry barges are required for supply traffic to the Kuban bridgehead, including the timber transports from Yalta to Kerch, we are still 8 naval ferry barges short. On 7 June, I requested Group Command (Serial No. ASM Gkdos. 3356 AS) to increase the flotillas in the Black Sea to 90 naval ferry barges before withdrawing naval ferry barges for operations in the Aegean Sea. Nevertheless, the general situation necessitated the withdrawal of 8 naval ferry barges to the Aegean Sea as Naval Group Command ordered. The lack of these 8 naval ferry barges is now having an adverse effect on supply traffic in Kerch Strait.

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 138 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1815 convoy No. 139 put out from Kerch as far as Cape Takil with only 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 2315 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 46 put in to Kerch on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters. At 1620 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 40 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1230 convoy No. 41 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3 proceeded from Mariupol to Taganrog to act as convoy escorts.

e. Most of the Crimea convoys and the convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. Theodosia-Taman convoy No. 23 did not put out because towing vessel "Adelheid" had been damaged in the Theodosia net barrage in bad weather.

Transportation performance to the Gotenkopf bridgehead for 1 - 10 July 1943.

1. Kerch Strait (tonnage carried by the Navy in brackets): 20,369 tons (5,122 tons)

Navy only:

2.	Genichesk-Temriuk	3,104 tons
3.	Kerch-Temriuk	4,346 tons
4.	Kerch-Taman	4,151 tons
5.	Theodosia-Taman	3,496 tons
6.	Berdyansk-Taman	800 tons
7.	Timber transports from Yalta to Kerch	903 tons
8.	Mariupol-Taganrog supplies	1,492 tons

CONFIDENTIAL

11 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0120 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 6 vessels off landing point 3, at 1430 2 M.T.B.s putting in to Ghelenjik from the south and at 1900 1 freighter of some 1,000 tons putting out from Ghelenjik to the south.

Daylight air reconnaissance: at 0700 1 motor minesweeper with otter gear out, course northwest, 10 miles southeast of Ghelenjik; at 0651 1 tug, 1 lighter, 3 boats and 2 small armed vessels, course northwest, 25 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0505 2 coastal vessels totaling 600 tons, and 2 small armed vessels, course north, 20 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0647 2 small armed vessels, course northwest, off Tuapse; at 0645 8 M.T.B.s, course southeast, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0627 1 freighter of 1,000 tons, 1 freighter of 800 tons, 1 minesweeper and 3 patrol vessels, course northwest, 5 miles south of Adler; at 0604 1 patrol boat, stopped, 28 miles west of Poti.

It can be assumed that the strong southwesterly wind in the central Black Sea blew more to the south close to the Caucasus coast, so that enemy supply traffic which without exception ran to the northwest could still proceed despite the weather.

Owing to the weather, no results were obtained by air reconnaissance over the ports.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. The ports on the Sea of Azov were not reconnoitered because of the weather. Less traffic close to the Turkish coast than on the last few days: only 1 freighter of approximately 1,000 tons was sighted west of Inebolu.

Night reconnaissance was not flown owing to the weather. Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported that, according to radio traffic, activity of small vessels was normal. No surface forces were located. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea and 2 off the east coast.

Own Situation:

0400 Temriuk reported that there had been no incidents in the patrol line off the Kuban estuary.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: SW - W winds, force 6, in squalls up to force 8, thundery squalls, visibility 15 miles.

Our offensive forces did not operate on the night of 10/11 July because of the weather. The night passed quietly without any enemy actions.

Operations by 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas will also be impossible during the coming night because of the weather.

1015 U 20 put out from Constantza for the operational area via the northern route.

Approximate positions of operational U-boats: U 18 15 miles northwest of Tuapse and U 23 between Sukhum and Cape Pitsunda.

The enemy convoy, which was sighted by air reconnaissance off Adler proceeding to the northwest (see "Enemy Situation"), was not attacked by U 18 because she had been transferred to the north a short time beforehand.

In reply to a query, I communicated to 1st Air Corps - Commander, Naval Air - that, after the increase in convoy traffic between the Bosporus and the ports in the western Black Sea, 6 to 8 steamers in each direction might be expected every month. As it is seldom possible to assemble several steamers in a convoy, about 12 escorts will be needed each month. In view of these figures, Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea intends to apply for further planes for convoy escort duty.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 8 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty. Four harbor defense boats had to put in again at 2335 because of the weather.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of 6 bombs dropped on the site at the east harbor of Novorossisk on the night of 10/11 July, there were no enemy air raids. Novorossisk also reported the usual artillery and mortar fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Motor minesweepers (RA) and (FR) which were to sweep the area between Kerch Strait and Anapa and provide anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy

No. 139 did not operate because of the weather. Minesweeping planes had also to abandon the search for ground mines north of Kerch Strait on account of the weather.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was difficult owing to the weather, but there were no incidents.

b. Anapa convoys:

Anapa convoy No. 139 put in to Kamish Burun with 5 naval ferry barges because of the weather. Transfer of the second part of the net barrage to Anapa was also postponed for the same reason.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1915 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 47 put out from Kerch with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter and anchored north of Cape Fonar. As naval gunnery lighter No. 11 is ready for operations again, she is being transferred to Temriuk with this convoy.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

One convoy, comprising 7 transport cutters and tug "Rheinkontor" escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3, put in to Mariupol at 1045 from Taganrog.

e. No convoys ran close to the Crimean coast or in the western Black Sea on account of the weather. The one exception was a towed convoy which is proceeding from Sulina to Odessa under the shelter of the coast.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1315 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 7 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik and between 2230 and 2300 8 vessels at landing points 3, 6 and 7.

Daylight air reconnaissance was very difficult off the Caucasus coast because of the weather. Only 1 minesweeper, course northwest, was sighted 2 miles west of Gagri. The ports were only partially reconnoitered without result.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.

Enemy shipping in the ports on the Sea of Azov was not identified because of the weather.

Slight traffic of Turkish freighters off the central part of the Turkish coast.

Night reconnaissance was not flown because of the weather.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria located 5 submarines: one 5 miles northeast of Cape Meganom, one 80 miles westsouthwest of Cape Khersonese, 2 more south of the Crimea and 1 in the eastern Black Sea. Activity of small vessels and supply traffic off the Caucasus coast were normal. No heavy surface forces were located.

Own Situation:

Owing to the weather, the day passed quietly without any offensive operations or convoy traffic.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 4 and 4 motorboats put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: SW - W winds, force 4 - 6, veering NW, squally, heavy clouds, tendency to thunderstorms, visibility 20 miles.

1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas will not operate on the night of 12/13 July because of the weather.

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 18 in air grid square 8582, U 23 in air grid square 0472 and U 20 in air grid square 1580. No reports were received from U-boats in operational areas. As she was putting out, U 20 was directed to operate against the enemy submarine reported by Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria to be northeast of Cape Meganom.

1300 Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 4 put in to Constantza from anti-submarine operations. Enemy not sighted.

With immediate effect, I have subordinated the 2nd group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla (naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11) for operations to Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus. I reserve the right to claim the naval gunnery lighters at any time for operational tasks. Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus was ordered to dispose 3 naval gunnery lighters at a time on continuous coastal defense duty off the Kuban estuary. All opportunities for attack must be exploited. Naval gunnery lighter No. 4 of the 1st group, which has been stationed in Temriuk up to now, will be transferred to Mariupol. One naval gunnery lighter of the 2nd group should always be stationed in Kerch for training and repairs.

After completion of repairs in Kerch, naval gunnery lighter No. 11 arrived in Temriuk today. Naval gunnery lighter No. 10 is also at operational readiness again in Temriuk.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty off the Kuban estuary.

Enemy Air Activity:

Throughout the day, there were no air raids on our convoys or on ports in the command area.

Novorossisk reported the usual artillery fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Today the 4 motor minesweepers (2 (RA) and 2 (FR)), which were employed on coastal route Brown between Kerch Strait and Anapa, swept 7 more mines. The boats have orders to escort Anapa convoys as far as Anapa and back until further notice.

The group with towed loop gear swept the route to the new winter harbor for ground mines, while the harbor defense flotilla swept the same route

for moored mines. Minesweeping had to be broken off on account of the weather. Minesweeping planes swept for ground mines north of Kerch Strait. No mines swept.

Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52, again operational in Constantza, put out for Sevastopol on 12 July.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait was impeded by the high sea, otherwise nothing to report.

b. Anapa convoys did not run because of the weather.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 47 put in to Temriuk with 3 naval ferry barges, 1 tug, 1 lighter and naval gunnery lighter No. 11 and, after unloading their cargo, commenced return passage at 1330. At 1130 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 41 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1430 convoy No. 40 commenced return passage to Temriuk.

d. Most of the Crimea convoys and the convoys in the western Black Sea were stopped on account of the weather.

In accordance with the terms of Führer Directive No. 40 dated 27 April 1942, the Navy assumed responsibility for the operation of all the coastal guns, as coastal guns are weapons of naval warfare.

In contrast to other command areas, the area of Admiral, Black Sea had at first only Army coastal artillery. Gradually a Naval Gunnery Detachment was set up in the Crimea, but most batteries had unsuitable captured guns and inadequate personnel. The batteries were so far from one another that strict, uniform control by one commander was impossible. For that reason, the individual naval batteries had to be incorporated into the fixed artillery groups of Army Coastal Artillery.

Now that naval batteries are being established, orders have been given that only one Naval Gunnery Detachment should be established in each naval shore commander's area and, in places without a detachment commander, the senior battery commander is to assume control of all the batteries, including Army coastal batteries. Therefore, both from an administrative and operational

standpoint, the Naval Gunnery Detachments are faced with a formidable task. Even a highly qualified corps of officers would find the task almost insuperable and we do not have such a corps.

In the Crimea, Army Coastal Artillery has some 28 batteries with the following staffs:

Artillery Commander 114 on the staff of Commanding General, Crimea with 1 major-general and a staff of 4 officers, 2 regimental commanders (colonels) with their staffs and 7 detachment commanders (lieutenant-colonels or majors with staffs).

Furthermore, Army Coastal Artillery is represented in higher Army commands (e.g. in Army Group A) by advisors with the rank of colonel. A new directive of Army High Command has placed the coastal guns under a general of Army Coastal Artillery.

Thus, the Army with their superior representation of officers is strong in quantity and in quality in the Army Coastal Batteries. They are therefore trying to eliminate the inconvenient influence of the Navy, proving they could provide equally good training, if not better. They can now be expected to take a stand against operational control.

If the Navy is to maintain control in the field of coastal artillery, I believe the following measures to be vital:

a. Formation of the available naval batteries in the most important naval bases into our own separate detachments:

   1. Sevastopol (already in existence)
   2. Theodosia (at present subordinate to Sevastopol)
   3. Kerch Strait (already in existence)
   4. Anapa (at present subordinate to Kerch Strait, but with its own group commander)
   5. Mariupol (already in existence).

b. To each detachment, a highly qualified naval gunnery commander must be appointed and each must have an efficient lieutenant on the staff.

c. To each naval shore commander's staff, at first with the exception of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine, a special gunnery advisor must be appointed (up to now the local naval gunnery detachment commander has carried out

this additional duty)..

d. Any battery commanders who are not first-rate must be replaced by suitable officers from Germany..

We cannot press our claim for control until we can prove that we have adequate personnel and material.

13 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0220 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 3 vessels off landing points 2 and 4. Our own artillery shelled 5 vessels at landing points 3 and 7 from 2220 to 2230 and an explosion was observed.

In medium visibility, daylight air reconnaissance detected the following enemy activity off the Caucasus coast: at 0606 1 tug, 3 lighters of some 800 tons and 2 patrol vessels, course southeast, 12 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0608 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, off Tuapse; at 0612 1 patrol boat, stopped, 15 miles west of Tuapse; at 0615 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons and 1 patrol vessel, course southeast, 8 miles south of Tuapse; at 0620 1 freighter of 800 - 1,000 tons, 1 minesweeper and 1 M.T.B., course southeast, 15 miles southeast of Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0802: 1 freighter of approximately 1,000 tons, 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, 7 motor minesweepers, 16 M.T.B.s and 55 small boats.

Tuapse at 0602 (aerial photograph): 1 destroyer of the "Frunse" class, 1 motor minesweeper, 7 M.T.B.s, 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, and 20 boats.

Sukhum at 0710: 2 freighters of 1,500 and 800 tons respectively.

Sochi and Ochemchiri were not reconnoitered because of the weather.

No air reconnaissance was flown in the Sea of Azov because of the weather.

Moderate traffic of Turkish freighters off the Turkish coast.

Night air reconnaissance detected several small vessels off the Caucasus coast 10 miles southwest of Ghelenjik and at 0030 a small vessel 5 miles northwest of Adler.

No activity of heavy surface forces was intercepted by Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria. Submarines detected: 4 in the western Black Sea and the Crimean area.

Increased enemy reconnaissance activity on the Army front at the Kuban bridgehead and increasing supply traffic behind the enemy front. However, 17th Army H.Q. did not believe that the enemy planned to attack; they were expecting a German attack.

Own Situation:

0100 Two enemy M.T.B.s were sighted from a range of 3,000 meters approaching Anapa. They were forced to turn off by Naval Port Commander's guns. Presumably, they were about to lay mines in the harbor entrance.

0400 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 14 boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. No incidents apart from slight enemy air activity. The boat of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Kerch which put in from the mine observation position north of Kerch Strait at 0915, also reported no incidents.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light winds, mainly SW, increasing with sea wind in the afternoon, cloudy to overcast, light local rain, visibility 15 miles.

1100 Seven ground attack planes bombed and machine-gunned Anapa convoy No. 140 off Maria Magdalena Bank. They ran in twice at an altitude of 300 - 400 meters. The naval ferry barges were only slightly damaged by splinters. Casualties: 1 officer and 2 men wounded. Our own 7.5 cm. guns shot down 1 plane. The motor minesweepers (RA) acting as anti-mine escort were not damaged and had no casualties.

Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate against enemy supply traffic between Tuapse and Cape Chugovkopas on the night of 13/14 July. Outward and return passage on direct courses south of the declared areas in the southern entrance to Kerch Strait.

At 1630 3 boats put out from Ivan Baba as ordered.

At present, 4 boats are ready for operations in the base of Ivan Baba (S 42, 45, 47, 72). One of the boats' commanders is still in training. At 1930 S 28 and S 46 put out from Ivan Baba for Constantza. S 26, S 51 and S 52 will probably be ready for passage to Constantza on 16 July. S 40, which collided with motor minesweeper R 33, will,

after emergency repairs, probably be ready for transfer from Kerch to Constantza on 20 July.

Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to occupy the reconnaissance line south of Kerch Peninsula between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil 8 miles from the coast on the night of 13/14 July. Their task was primarily anti-submarine operations. The boats did not put out until 2330 on account of the weather (wind increased to SW, force 4, in the evening).

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 23 in air grid square 0407, U 18 in air grid square 8580 and U 20 in air grid square 5580 (on outward passage to the operational area).

When air reconnaissance reported 1 freighter of approximately 1,000 tons, 1 minesweeper and 1 M.T.B., course southeast, south of Tuapse at 0620, the boats were ordered to attack and directed to reckon on the formation proceeding at about 7 knots, because air reconnaissance speed figures (average speed 11 - 17 knots) were usually too high.

Recent traffic from Tuapse to the south after about 36 hours for unloading and the fact that there is another freighter of 1,000 tons still in Ghelenjik induced me to transfer U 18 to the Tuapse-Uchdere area. From 14 July, the Tuapse-Idokopas operational area will be occupied by U 20 which has just arrived. The boats were informed of the enemy vessels in the ports and of the imminent operations by 1st and 11th E-Boat Flotillas.

1230 An ammunition train caught fire on the north mole at Kerch: cause unknown. In all, 46 loaded goods wagons exploded. It was assumed that it was a case of sabotage. Towing vessels "Engerau" and "Woywoda", lighter No. 1480 and lighter "Carola", which were lying at the north mole, were salvaged and towed off to the roads. None of the vessels was more than slightly damaged by splinters and fire. According to reports received up to now, casualties were relatively slight because 77 soldiers and civilians were rescued by the tug "Braunkohle" from the burning mole and harbor. The extent of damage to the mole is not yet known.

1445 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 4, 8 and 9 put in to Kerch from Temriuk.

Sevastopol reported that, after reinforcing the escort of the "Boy Feddersen", "Varna" convoy which put out at 1200, submarine chaser "Xanten" commenced passage to Constantza because her search gear broke down.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 14 boats put out from Temriuk on patrol duty. One harbor defense boat put out from Kerch for the mine observation position.

Enemy Air Activity:

With the exception of the attack on Anapa convoy No. 140, there were no air raids on convoys, naval forces or ports in the Crimea or on the Sea of Azov.

From 2300 to 2345, about 30 bombs were dropped on Novorossisk in the harbor area. The sites at the west harbor and the quarters of Naval Port Commander were heavily bombarded. About 200 rounds of various calibers were fired.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green seven times north of the approach buoy. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: Check sweeps were carried out for moored mines on the route to the new fish-salting factory winter harbor (west). No mines swept.

Anapa: Motor minesweepers (RA) and (FR), acting as anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy No. 140, swept 10 more inertia contact mines on route Brown between Kerch Strait and Anapa.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait: Transshipment was disrupted by the explosion of the ammunition train (see above). Engine trouble on the rope railway led to further reduction in transportation performance (300 tons of ammunition).

b. Anapa convoy No. 140 ran with 7 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1810 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 48 put out from Kerch for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 40 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 3 naval ferry barges. At 1030 convoy No. 41 put in to Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter and, after unloading, commenced return passage at 1400.

d. Mariupol: At 2000 the convoy of 11 transport cutters, escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 2 and 3 and 2 harbor defense boats commenced return passage to Taganrog.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. At 0700 the "Tisza" convoy put in to Sevastopol from Constantza and at 1200 the "Boy Feddersen", "Varna" convoy put out from Sevastopol for Constantza.

CONFIDENTIAL

14 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0900 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 9 vessels putting in to Ghelenjik from the beachhead.

In medium visibility, daylight air reconnaissance detected slight traffic only: at 0832 1 probable minesweeper, course southeast, 10 miles northwest of Sukhum; at 0825 2 coastal vessels, course southeast, 18 miles northwest of Ochemchiri.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0924 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of 800 tons, 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,400 tons, 6 motor minesweepers, 6 M.T.B.s and 70 small boats.

Tuapse at 0734 (aerial photograph): 14 coastal vessels totaling 3,600 tons, 5 motor minesweepers, 14 M.T.B.s and 15 small boats.

Sochi and Sukhum were only partially reconnoitered. There were no ships in Adler, Gagri or Gudauty. Ochemchiri was not observed because of clouds.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov. The number of ships in ports and fisheries was essentially unchanged. Off the Turkish coast only 1 freighter of 2,500 tons, course east, was sighted north of Samsun.

At 0050 night air reconnaissance reported 1 towed convoy 20 miles southeast of Ghelenjik.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria did not intercept any activity of surface forces in radio traffic. Submarines detected: 3 in the eastern Black Sea. Normal activity of small vessels.

Nothing to report from the Army front.

Own Situation:

0010 For a short time around 0010, an enemy vessel shelled Temriuk harbor entrance. No damage or casualties. Harbor defense boat RT 02, which occupied the patrol line off Temriuk, pursued the enemy vessel in the direction of the gun flashes, but failed to catch up with her. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11, which

were also in the patrol line, were further away and did not sight the enemy.

0350 E-boats S 502, S 503 and S 505 put in to Theodosia from operations. Nothing was sighted in the patrol line between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil.

0620 E-boats S 72, S 45 and S 47 put in to Theodosia from the operational area to refuel. From 2310 to 0050, the boats were in the Cape Chugovkopas area and, despite the bright moonlight and clear visibility, did not sight any enemy traffic. The boats did not operate against the towed convoy (1 tug, 1 lighter and 2 patrol vessels) which was reported by 1st Air Corps night reconnaissance at 0050 as 20 miles southeast of Ghelenjik, because they did not receive the radio message until 0148. At 0825 all the boats put in to Ivan Baba.

Examination revealed that delays in communication were caused by bad reception conditions on the Air Force frequency. The boats had switched to the Air Force frequency, but had not even heard the message because of the interference.

In future, a powerful radio link should be employed to avoid such occurrences.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Odessa - Yalta: SW - W winds, force 2 - 3, increasing with sea wind in the afternoon and veering W - NW, force 3, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: Light variable winds, sea wind in the afternoon, fair, visibility 20 miles.

Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to repeat last night's operation in the Tuapse-Cape Chugovkopas area during the night of 14/15 July. As U 20 was operating in the same area, the E-boats were forbidden to operate against submarines east of 37° 30' E and south of 44° 30' N. At 1700 3 boats put out from Ivan Baba for the operation.

Two boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to lie in wait off Maria Magdalena Bank from 2300 to 0300, as further enemy minelaying was to be expected in this area in view of the many mines already swept on the route between Kerch Strait and Anapa. Since they were almost all moored mines (inertia contact mines) and the enemy did not drop them by plane, it was assumed

that the mines were laid by M.T.B.s or motor gunboats. The increasing number of M.T.B.s in Tuapse and Ghelenjik and the frequent appearance of enemy M.T.B.s off Anapa, presumably serving as camouflage, lend credence to this assumption.

After the operation, the boats should put in to Anapa and repeat the operation from there on the following night.

At 1940 S 503 and S 505 put out from Theodosia for operations.

U-boat positions: U 20 in air grid square 8530, U 18 in air grid square 9430 and U 23 in air grid square 9460.

In view of the E-boat operations, U 20 was ordered to withdraw from the coast from 2200 to 0200 during the night of 14/15 July. At 1559 the boat reported that she had been recognized and shelled from the coast and also bombed. Nevertheless, she was directed to remain in the same operational area (Tuapse-Cape Idokopas) until further notice.

At 2051 U 23 reported that her diving capacity was still limited to 40 meters as a result of outside pressure in fuel tank No. 2. Throughout the day, the boat observed no traffic in the Cape Pitsunda-Gagri-Adler area. She was ordered to proceed to Sevastopol to be examined and to take in more torpedoes and fuel.

Today, Naval Shore Commander, Crimea looked for a site for the new 15 cm. battery. Cape Chauda and the headland 1.5 miles northwest of it were the 2 areas in question for this battery. The latter position was chosen because it was much higher and from there the whole coastal section in Theodosia Bay could be overlooked. With an observation post on Cape Chauda, the battery will dominate the entire area around Cape Chauda (effective beaten angle 360°).

Transportation of material and the later routine supplying of the battery can be carried out via the sea route from Theodosia. Construction will be started in August.

1700 One harbor defense boat put out from Kerch for the mine observation position north of Kerch Strait.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 13 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

2020 Mariupol reported that the convoy of tugs, lighters and transport cutters which was proceeding from Mariupol to Taganrog escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3 was unsuccessfully attacked by an enemy plane.

2146 At 2146 off Sudak, planes attacked the convoy consisting of mine-exploding vessel No. 192, "Woywoda" and naval ferry barges F 302 and F 329. Seven bombs were dropped; no damage, no planes shot down.

2345 Three enemy M.T.B.s were sighted 1.5 miles northwest of the Anapa mole. They were forced to turn off to the southeast by naval batteries.

2300 Rumanian observers saw 3 mines being dropped in the Danube off Topal and 1 man baling out near Durobanzu. The parachutist has not been found.

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the usual artillery bombardment of the sites at the east and west harbors, the southern sector and the southern part of the town.

There were no air raids on ports or loading places in the command area during the day.

Minesweeping Activity:

Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52 were ordered to check the coastal route with towed loop gear, 15-meter pendant, while proceeding from Sevastopol to the east.

Five more moored mines were swept on the Kerch Strait-Anapa route between point 19A and point 20.

No mines were found when the route to the new fish-salting factory winter harbor (west) was swept six times.

Sevastopol: Route Green was swept north of the approach buoy without result.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled. The debris on the north mole should be cleared by 16 July and the mole will then be ready again for transshipment on the usual scale.

b. Anapa convoys:

At 1945 convoy No. 141 put out from Kerch as far as Janysh Takil with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 0930 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 48 put in to Temriuk with 5 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter and, after unloading, commenced return passage to Kerch at 1400 with 5 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters. At 1430 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 41 put out for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter.

d. At 1850 the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy put in to Taganrog with 1 harbor defense boat and 4 transport cutters.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. The "Boy Feddersen", "Varna" convoy put in to Constantza at 1420. No incidents on passage.

CONFIDENTIAL

15 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0400 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 9 vessels proceeding from the beachhead to Ghelenjik. At 1925 5 vessels with 1 escort vessel put out from Ghelenjik to the south. From 2210 to 2245 there were 7 vessels off the beachhead.

No daylight air reconnaissance was flown over the Caucasus coast today.

The Sea of Azov and the ports on the Sea of Azov were not reconnoitered on account of the weather.

Air reconnaissance again detected several merchant ships off the Turkish coast, including 1 passenger steamer of 3,000 tons 10 miles north of Pazar (between Trabzon and Batum).

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria did not detect any activity of heavy surface forces from radio traffic. Normal activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 1 in an unidentified position in the western Black Sea.

No important operations on the Army front.

Own Situation:

0400 E-boats S 505 and S 503 put in to Theodosia from operations. On passage to the operational area, the boats were bombed four times at 2042 10 miles south of Cape Chauda. 12 - 15 bombs were dropped, but no hits were scored and no damage caused. At 2122 a further attack was made in which 5 - 6 bombs were dropped. This attack was also unsuccessful.

Owing to the breakdown of both engines aboard S 505, the boats could only proceed at cruising speed or less from 2000. For this reason, passage to Anapa was abandoned and the boats took up searching positions close to the coast between Cape Takil and Cape Chauda. Enemy not sighted.

0430 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 13 boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. The boats reported no incidents.

0630 E-boats S 72, S 42 and S 47 put in to Theodosia from the operational area to refuel. From 2345

to 0110, the boats lay in wait between Cape Chugovkopas and the Vulan valley. During the bright moonlit night with good visibility, no traffic was sighted. No enemy countermeasures, slight air activity.

At 0825 the boats put in to Ivan Baba.

S 26, S 51 and S 52 were reported operational again. It was planned that they should put out for Ivan Baba on 16 July.

0900 "Ship 19" put in to Ak Mechet after anti-submarine operations in the Cape Tarkhankutzki area. At 1800 she put out again for anti-submarine operations in the Cape Tarkhankutzki-Eupatoria area.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts:

Odessa - Yalta: NW winds, force 7 - 5, decreasing to force 3 - 2 in the course of the day, cloudy, visibility 15 miles.

Yalta - Novorossisk: Wind at first SW, force 2 - 3, veering after the passing of a cold weather front and increasing to NW, force 5 - 7, tendency to thunderstorms, visibility 20 miles.

In view of this weather, no operations were ordered for 1st or 11th E-Boat Flotilla.

Approximate U-boat positions: U 18 in air grid square 9410, U 20 in air grid square 8530, U 23 in air grid square 8420 (on return passage to Sevastopol).

Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52 were ordered to pick up U 23 south of Cape Sarich at point SS 1 at 1300 on 16 July and to escort her to Sevastopol. The boats had put in to Theodosia at 1055 after sweeping route Brown. R 30 then continued sweeping the route as far as Cape Takil and both boats returned to Yalta at 1920.

In reply to an inquiry from Commander, 30th U-Boat Flotilla, U 18 reported proposed date for return passage as 18 July.

The Ochakov-Nikolaiev-Kherson area was reopened to shipping traffic by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Danube Delta in agreement with Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea.

Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine reported naval gunnery lighter No. 3 non-operational until

17 July. He was then ordered to ensure that all naval gunnery lighters would be operational from 17 July.

1630 One harbor defense boat put out from Kerch for the mine observation position in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 11 and 12 boats put out from Temriuk for coastal defense duty off the Kuban estuary.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the above-mentioned attack on S 505 and S 503, there were no air raids on naval forces or convoys. Yalta reported that a few bombs were dropped on Gursuf at 1030. At 1323 4 planes attacked, dropping 25 - 30 bombs which caused slight damage to buildings. No damage in the harbor.

Novorossisk reported that 13 planes machine-gunned the southern sector. There was the usual artillery bombardment of the sites at the east harbor, the southern sector and the southern part of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear swept no mines on route Green north of the approach buoy. The FZ-boats did not operate because their motor generator broke down.

Kerch Strait: The group with towed loop gear swept the route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor west of the line of buoys. Two mines were swept in 45° 10.5' N, 36° 33.7' E; presumably they were German mines.

Kerch Strait-Anapa route: The group of motor minesweepers (RA) acted as anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy No. 141 and swept 2 more inertia contact mines in 45° 5.5' N, 36° 45' E. This position lies on the new coastal route, indicating that the enemy had already laid mines there.

Continuous enemy minelaying activity on the route to Anapa made it necessary to continue to run Anapa convoys only with anti-mine escort. Probably they were moored mines with a general depth setting of 3 meters.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Anapa convoy No. 141 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1800 convoy No. 142 put out from Kerch for Zhelezni Rog with 7 naval ferry barges. With this convoy, net barrage section II for Anapa net barrage was transferred by "Grafenau".

c. Temriuk convoys:

At 1945 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 49 put out from Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges.

At 1030 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 42 put in to Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter and, after unloading, commenced return passage at 1730.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

At 2015 the return Taganrog-Mariupol convoy put out from Taganrog with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3, 1 tug and 7 transport cutters.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident. No steamer convoys ran because of the full moon.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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APPENDIX I

COPY

Admiral, Black Sea 7 July, 1943

Serial No. Gkdos. 4147 A I.

To:
Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla
Group Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Kerch
1st Air Corps.

Copy to:
Army Group A, Operations Branch
Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus
Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q.

I. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11, with navigational assistance from escorting motor minesweepers R 30 and R 166, will attack fishery Achuevski on the night of 8/9 July.

II. Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla will be in charge.

III. Task:

Bombardment of the fishery installations on the coast and in the Protoka estuary, destruction of vessels lying off the coast, and if possible, of any naval forces encountered during the operation.

IV. Execution:

A. At 1500 the formation should put out from Kerch to be in position 201 at about 2000 and in position A at about 0200 (see appended diagram).

B. The bombardment should be carried out as early as possible but not until exact observation of impacts enables fire control. Zero hour will thus depend on visibility and the weather. The boats' speed on the last approach stretch must be calculated to reach position B at the right time.

C. Formation: line ahead. During the bombardment, the motor minesweepers should be on the disengaged side of the formation of naval gunnery lighters.

D. General instructions for distribution of fire:

1. If there are no countermeasures from the shore:

a. Tactical control vessel No. 1 and vessel No. 2 should attack vessels and installations on the coast.

b. Vessels Nos. 3 and 4 should attack installations etc. in the Protoka estuary (see enclosed aerial photograph).

2. If defending shore batteries open up, vessels Nos. 1 and 3 should reduce them to silence, while vessels Nos. 2 and 4 shell targets as in para. 1.a. and b.

3. The main task is the destruction of enemy vessels. Target should therefore be altered immediately if any vessels put out from the Protoka estuary during the bombardment.

V. Ammunition used during the coastal bombardment should amount to two-thirds of the 8.8 cm. shells on board.

VI. After execution of the task, the formation should proceed from position C to point 220 in close formation at maximum cruising speed. Three naval gunnery lighters (numbers to be determined by Group Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla) should put in to Temriuk from there with the group commander. The motor minesweepers and the fourth naval gunnery lighter should continue passage to Kerch.

VII. 1st Air Corps has been requested to provide fighter escort for the formation on 9 July from 0300 as far as off Temriuk (approximately until 0730).

VIII. Communications arrangements: See Appendix.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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APPENDIX I/1

COPY

Communications Arrangements

1. General instructions:

Radio silence should be maintained unless enemy vessels are encountered. Radio may be used only by the express orders of the flotilla commander. Unless impossible, short signals should be transmitted as in para. 5.

2. Radio frequency:

Command frequency East. Apart from the boats, the following stations will be on this frequency:

Naval Radio Station, Simferopol - control
Naval Radio Station, Kerch
Naval Radio Station, Mariupol
Naval Radio Station, Yalta
Naval Radio Station, 17th Army H.Q.

The radio stations have orders to listen particularly for the boats. Naval Communications Officer, Mariupol will repeat all radio messages to the boats immediately after transmission by control and also half an hour later. Shore radio stations will repeat messages transmitted by the boats if control reports that they have not been understood.

For accurate tuning, the boats should switch to command frequency East 3 hours before sailing. (Command frequency East = 3,080 kc/s.) The sets should be switched off half an hour after putting in.

3. Codes:

Radio manual South should be carried by the entire flotilla. Naval gunnery lighters should hand in Code M before sailing.

4. Change of frequency:

Frequency should not be altered from command frequency East during the operation.

5. Short Signals:

Signals should start with "DD".

Z D N	Bombardment carried out.
A K D	Operation carried out as scheduled.
X B P	Am breaking off the operation because of the weather.
H M R	Have to break off the operation owing to damage.
Q C J	Am returning to the port of departure.
K U J	Enemy air reconnaissance in grid square .....
L B V	Am being attacked by enemy planes in grid square .....
N B U	Am being attacked by enemy naval forces in grid square .....
G P W	Am being driven off by enemy naval forces in grid square .....
A Z F	Enemy attack repulsed in grid square .....

Grid square data according to Air Force terminology. Numbers should be transmitted in plain language. Short signals should not be encoded and should be used sparingly, at the most 2 groups with numbers.

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Comments on the War Diary of Admiral, Black Sea 1 - 15 July 1943

Reference:

"Own Situation", 3 July:

The importance of destroying enemy naval vessels has not been sufficiently emphasized in offensive operations by naval gunnery lighters. Well-armed enemy motorboats which are continuously increasing in number and are generally superior to our forces in speed constitute a special danger to our supplies and coastal defenses on the Sea of Azov. It is therefore vital that they be destroyed.

Reference:

"Own Situation", 4 July - Supply traffic:

Group agrees with the opinion of Admiral, Black Sea concerning the sphere of influence of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping.

Reference:

"Own Situation", 5 and 6 July - Joint E-boat and U-boat operations:

E-boats and U-boats were again employed in the same area. As Group has repeatedly observed, although they are informed of one another's operations, there is always confusion which may reduce the prospects of both U-boats and E-boats.

Reference:

"Supply Traffic", 9 July - Construction of a breakwater at the Kuban bridgehead:

Constructional work to improve the landing of supplies for Army Group A is not the concern of the Navy. The Navy can only help in an advisory capacity. The only constructional projects which concern the Navy are those which will afford better protection for naval forces in the bases. Army Group should be advised that similar requests for improvement of supply facilities ashore, such as the construction of bridges and harbor installations, must be submitted to Army High Command.

Reference:

Final paragraph on 12 July - Naval batteries:

Organizational and personnel questions are dealt with separately. Granting of the requests will depend on the general situation regarding personnel.

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Despite orders and repeated reminders, the War Diary has again been submitted to Group in triplicate. The first copy must be sent direct to Naval Staff, Operations Division in accordance with previous orders.

For Naval Group Command South

(Signed) Brinkmann

Chief of Staff.

CONFIDENTIAL

WAR DIARY

OF

ADMIRAL, BLACK SEA

16 - 31 JULY, 1943

PG/31536

CONFIDENTIAL

16 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 14 vessels at the beachhead off landing points 2, 3 and 4 and a larger vessel, probably a minesweeper, off landing point 2 between 2150 and 2240. Flares dropped by the Air Force enabled our batteries to attack the vessels. Two vessels were again sighted at landing point 2 at midnight.

Daylight air reconnaissance sighted the following vessels: at 0646 2 towed vessels, each 600 tons, and 1 motor minesweeper, course south, slight speed, 10 miles northwest of Tuapse; at 0429 1 merchant ship of 1,500 tons, 1 minesweeper and 3 motor minesweepers, course northwest, moderate speed, 18 miles southeast of Tuapse.

Enemy shipping in port:

Gholenjik (aerial photograph): 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,800 tons, 5 motor minesweepers, 4 M.T.B.s and about 60 small boats.
Tuapse at 0510 (aerial photograph): 1 freighter of about 1,000 tons, 9 coastal vessels totaling 2,500 tons, 3 to 4 motor minesweepers, 12 M.T.B.s and 15 small boats.
Sochi at 0532 (aerial photograph): 3 motor minesweepers and 30 small boats, some beached.
The other ports were not examined because of the weather.

No air reconnaissance was flown over the Sea of Azov.

No sighting reports from the western Black Sea or the Turkish coast.

Night reconnaissance was not flown.

Main Naval D/F Station reported no activity of large vessels. Patrol vessel activity increased off the east coast. Submarines detected: 2 in the Crimean area, 2 in the eastern Black Sea and 3 in unidentified positions. According to radio monitoring, 1 enemy submarine has been called without success since 7 July.

After a long interval, enemy battalions again attacked on the Army front west of Krimskaya.

Although they were supported by tanks, the attacks were repulsed and the enemy suffered many casualties.

Own Situation:

The night passed quietly: no German operations, nothing to report.

0020 Radar station No. 7 reported several small vessels 8 miles southeast of Cape Takil, course 055°. This report most probably referred to Anapa convoy No. 148 from Kerch which dropped anchor off Zhelezni Rog at 0200. The convoy had detected no enemy vessels on passage.

0400 Naval gunnery lighter No. 11 and 12 boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. Apart from slight enemy air activity, they had nothing to report. The mine observation boat of Harbor Defense Flotilla, Kerch put in to Kerch at 0620, also with nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light variable winds, mainly N, freshening at noon with sea wind, fair, visibility 20 miles.

1030 E-boats S 51 and S 52 put out from Constantza for Sevastopol where they arrived at 2245. S 26 left Constantza at 1800 for Ivan Baba after compensating her compass and taking meteorological buoys on board.

30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reported motor minesweeper RA 54 again ready for action.

1043 Anapa convoy No. 142 was attacked on return passage 10 miles southeast of Zhelezni Rog by 12 Russian planes (9 bombers and 3 fighters). It was a low-level attack from an altitude of 100 to 150 meters. 80 to 100 small and medium bombs were dropped and some planes also machine-gunned the convoy. The combined operations landing craft, which was being towed by "Grafenau", was sunk by a direct hit. No casualties, as the boat was unmanned. Only slight splinter damage and penetrations aboard the naval ferry barges. Casualties: Naval ferry barge F 446: 1 man killed, 1 man badly wounded and 2 men slightly wounded. F 537: 2 men slightly wounded. The wounded men were transferred to Kerch by sea rescue plane.

Two planes were definitely shot down by the guns of the naval ferry barges and another was probably brought down. Our convoy fighter escort shot down 6 more planes (5 bombers and 1 fighter) as they ran in to attack.

1300 U 23 was picked up at point SS 1 by motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52 which were acting as entering escort. She put in to Sevastopol at 1745.

1800 "Ship 19" put out from Ak Mechet for anti-submarine patrol in the Cape Tarkhankutzki area.

Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 9 put out from Kerch for Temriuk. They anchored in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait and continued passage to Temriuk on 17 July. One harbor defense boat put out from Kerch at 1630 for the mine observation position.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the air attack on Anapa convoy No. 142 (see above), Yalta was also attacked at 1803 by 4 planes. 24 bombs were dropped on the center of the town. No damage was caused to the harbor or to naval installations. A few bombs were dropped over Anapa. Novorossisk was not attacked from the air. Shelling and mortar fire on the harbor sites and the northern and southern parts of the town.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear swept route Green eight times from the approach point to the north. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: With 2 sets of towed loop gear, vessels swept the new route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor 14 times. No mines swept. Motor minesweepers (RA) and (FR) escorted Anapa convoy No. 142. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 142 ran with 7 naval ferry barges and tug "Grafenau" with net barrage section 2 for Anapa. Anti-mine escort was provided by 2 motor minesweepers (RA) and 2 (FR). For air attack, see above.

At 1910 on 16 July, convoy No. 143 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges and proceeded as far as Cape Takil.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 49 put in to Temriuk at 0830 with 4 naval ferry barges. After unloading, the vessels put out again for Kerch.

At 1145 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 42 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. At 1520 convoy No. 43 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys:

A convoy of 7 transport cutters, escorted by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3, put in to Mariupol at 1000 on return passage. Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3 put out again at 1430 for Taganrog with another convoy of 6 transport cutters.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. No steamer convoys ran because of the full moon.

CONFIDENTIAL

17 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk detected a total of 16 vessels off the beachhead between 2200 and 0400 on the night of 16/17 July. At 0355 1 large and 1 small freighter, 2 lighters and 1 patrol vessel put in to Ghelenjik and at 2005 14 vessels were detected with course set for the beachhead.

No daylight or night reconnaissance was flown today over the Caucasus coast. No enemy sighting reports came in from the central or western Black Sea.

No enemy shipping was sighted in the Sea of Azov. Enemy shipping in ports on the Sea of Azov:

Yeisk at 0800 (aerial photograph): 4 small armed vessels, 2 small coastal vessels and about 40 boats.
Primorsko Akhtari at 0748 (aerial photograph): 6 small vessels, 2 small coastal vessels and about 50 boats.

From radio traffic, Main Naval D/F Station detected that 1 probable cruiser or destroyer put out from a port on the southeast coast. As this ship was not again intercepted at sea, she might possibly only have been transferring from Batum to Poti or from Poti to Batum. Submarines detected: 3 in the western Black Sea and the area off the Crimean coast and another in an unidentified position.

Own Situation:

0005 Mariupol reported that naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3, which were escorting convoy No. 21 from Taganrog to Mariupol, had a brief engagement with a small enemy vessel of an unidentified type. The enemy at once withdrew to the east under a smoke screen without answering the fire. Taganrog was shelled from the opposite bank near Pavlo Ochakov from 0805 to 0940. 13 rounds were fired on the harbor, dockyards and town area without causing damage.

0430 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 10 and 11 and 13 boats put in to Tamriuk from coastal defense duty. Nothing to report.

0545 At 0545 off Cape Chauda, a submarine fired 1 torpedo at Theodosia-Taman convoy No. 25. The torpedo passed under motor vessel "Adelheid" and touched the ship's bottom below the engine room without exploding. No depth charges were dropped by the naval ferry barges as the position of the submarine was not identified.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: W - NW winds, force 1 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon, mainly fair, visibility about 20 miles after morning mist.

"Ship 19" put in to Ak Mechet from anti-submarine patrol in the Cape Tarkhankutzki area. No locations were obtained. The ship put out again at 1800 for the area between Cape Tarkhankutzki and Sevastopol and then put in to Sevastopol.

1000 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 9 put in to Temriuk from Kerch. Thus all 4 naval gunnery lighters of the 2nd group were in Temriuk at operational readiness. Joining a convoy sailing for Berdyansk, naval gunnery lighter No. 4 put out from Kerch at 1745 for Mariupol.

Operations of 1st E-Boat Flotilla off the Caucasus coast do not promise much success tonight because of the full moon. On the other hand, the many mines swept on the Anapa route indicate that small enemy minelaying forces are continuously laying mines in this area.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were therefore ordered to proceed to lurking positions south of Taman Peninsula on the night of 17/18 July. In view of the enemy minefields, the boats were to operate between 36° 50' E and 37° 05' E and were not to pass north of 45° N.

They were to operate independently against any enemy forces which might be attacking Anapa. Approach and return passage at a certain distance from the coast, south of the declared area off Kerch Strait. 1st E-Boat Flotilla was informed of the hour at which convoy No. 144 would pass during the night on passage to Anapa. Naval Port Commander and Naval Communications Officer, Anapa will transmit all enemy sighting reports immediately to the E-boats on the control frequency. Four boats put out from Ivan Baba at 1915.

S 26 put in to Ivan Baba from Constantza at 0430, followed at 1345 by S 51 and S 52. Thus 7 boats were again ready for action.

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 20 in air grid square 8567 and U 18 in air grid square 9410.

Examination of U 23 in Sevastopol by a fleet engineer revealed that fuel tank II was leaking. As the boat's diving capacity would therefore be limited to 25 meters and there would also be a danger of oil traces, she received orders to transfer to Constantza on 18 July as the repairs could only be done there. The commander of U 23 reported to Admiral, Black Sea today.

U 18 reported at 2219 that she had sunk a 2,000-ton freighter at 1936. The freighter was in a convoy with 2 minesweepers heading for the south-east. Position at 1936: air grid square 94163. After the action, the boat was pursued with depth charges and bombs. She was ordered to commence return passage to Theodosia.

This further success of U 18 deserved special acknowledgment as she had already sunk 2 vessels in the first part of her operation.

After a conference with Commander Torri, the new Chief, Italian Naval Command, Constantza I today ordered 1st Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla and the Italian base organization to transfer from Constantza to Sevastopol on 20 July. The necessary transport (naval ferry barges) will be made available by Commander, Sea Transportation, Constantza; outward escort will be provided by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea and inward escort at Sevastopol by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Kerch Strait.

1245 Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 52 put out from Sevastopol for Kerch. They proceeded via route Brown, where they again carried out check sweeps with oropesa gear, 15-meter pendant.

Motor minesweeper R 33 put in to Yalta at 0410 today. She is proceeding to the west for dock-yard repairs.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 10 and 12 boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty. One harbor defense boat put out from Kerch for the mine observation position in the northern entrance to Kerch Strait.

2130 Battery Gursuf, Yalta reported sighting 1 white and 5 red flares out at sea. In view of the morning report from Main Naval D/F Station on the probable sailing of a cruiser or destroyer and also the earlier enemy operations off the Crimean coast on full moon nights, I ordered all E-boats

in Ivan Baba to be at immediate readiness. As no further sighting reports were received, it may be assumed that these signals were connected with the air attack on Yalta at 2120.

2155 Ak Mechet reported that engine noises had been heard to the northwest. Two vessels were indistinctly observed. When the request for recognition signals was not answered, warning shots were fired by the 10.5 cm. battery at 2210 and the vessels then turned away. Probably it was a surfaced enemy submarine and the observation was inaccurate.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on naval forces or convoys in the course of the day. Mariupol reported penetration by single planes during the night of 16/17 July. Only a few bombs were dropped.

Air attacks were made on Yalta at 1115 and 2120. About 20 bombs were dropped, causing no damage to naval property. At Novorossisk 10 bombs were dropped on the harbor sites, the southern part of the town and the southern sector. There was also artillery and mortar bombardment of the sites at the east harbor and the town area.

Minesweeping Activity:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 swept the Danube between Kilometers 272 and 186. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept route Green four times with towed loop gear from the approach buoy northwards. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: The route to the fish-salting factory winter harbor was swept twelve times with towed loop gear. Minesweeping planes swept the Kerch Strait-Temriuk route ten times from point 220 to point Z 1. Motor minesweepers (RA) and 1 motor minesweeper (FR) escorted Anapa convoy No. 143. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic ran as scheduled in Kerch Strait.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 143 ran as scheduled with 6 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 144 put out from Kerch at 1815 with 6 naval ferry barges; 1 naval ferry barge put in to Kerch again at 2145 with engine trouble.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 50, comprising 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters, put out from Kerch at 1900 for Temriuk. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 43 put in to Temriuk at 1030 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter and, after unloading, commenced return passage at 1530. In view of the danger of mines, convoys will sail only by day until further orders.

d. The return Taganrog-Mariupol convoy put out from Taganrog at 2000 with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 3, 7 transport cutters and 1 tug.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. No steamer convoys ran because of the full moon. For submarine attack on the Theodosia-Taman convoy, see above.

CONFIDENTIAL

18 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1400 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 2 minesweepers off Ghelenjik, at 1920 3 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik and at 2110 17 vessels, including 3 patrol vessels, with course set for landing point 3.

Daylight and night air reconnaissance was flown without incident. The ports were not examined for enemy shipping. Only 2 medium Turkish freighters off Trabzon were reported from the southeastern Black Sea.

Enemy shipping in the ports and fishery harbors on the Sea of Azov was unchanged. No activity of surface forces was detected by Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria from radio traffic. Slight activity of small vessels. Submarines detected: 3 in the western Black Sea and 4 in unidentified positions.

Own Situation:

0430 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11, 6 harbor defense boats and 6 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from the patrol line. The naval gunnery lighters had an engagement with 3 enemy motor gunboats between 2300 and midnight. The action was fought at a range of about 2,000 meters. No hits were observed on the enemy vessels. One machine-gun hit was scored on naval gunnery lighter No. 8. No casualties. The enemy was forced to withdraw to the north. Otherwise nothing to report from the patrol line.

0455 E-boats S 45, S 47 and S 72 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. The boats had been in the patrol line south of Taman Peninsula on a cloudless moonlit night from 2240 to 0230. No enemy vessels were sighted. Very lively air activity. The boats approached unobserved at 2125. The enemy dropped 6 to 8 heavy fragmentation bombs close to S 72. Slight splinter damage was caused and 2 men were wounded.

0630 The harbor defense boat put in to Kerch from the mine observation position with nothing to report.

0900 Motor minesweeper R 30, which with motor minesweeper RA 52 was escorting a convoy from Yalta to Kerch, reported an unsuccessful attack by a submarine.

0930 "Ship 19" put in to Sevastopol from anti-submarine patrol in the Cape Tarkhankutzki-Eupatoria-Sevastopol area. No locations. She put out again at 1800 for anti-submarine operations in the same area.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light variable winds, sea wind in the afternoon, mainly fair, visibility after morning mist 15 miles.

In the present bright moonlit nights, I consider that another operation by 1st E-Boat Flotilla off the south Taman coast for observation of the Anapa route would not be advisable. The boats' experiences during last night's operation show that with the present visibility, even at slight speed, they can be detected by the numerous enemy planes. As this jeopardizes the whole purpose of the operation, it would be a waste of operational hours.

I planned instead to deploy a group of 3 boats in the southeastern Sea of Azov again. Enemy motor gunboats are still operating there, as was shown last night by the attack on the naval gunnery lighters. With their inferior speed, the naval gunnery lighters were only able to force the enemy boats to withdraw and there were no sinkings.

Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to carry out the operation. They were to be equipped with 4 cm. guns in first-class working order.

The boats put out from Ivan Baba for the operation at 1630.

Because of the increasing number of enemy submarines, all available boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to take up lurking positions directly off the coast between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil on the night of 18/19 July. Anti-submarine activity is prohibited south of 44° 30' N because U 18 is on return passage to Theodosia. Naval shore commanders will inform the coastal stations. Our convoys will not pass through the E-boats' operational area during the night.

Unfortunately, 11th E-Boat Flotilla is still unable to carry out any large-scale operations.

S 502, S 503 and S 505 put out from Theodosia at 1930 to carry out the prescribed operation.

The positions of enemy submarines obtained by D/F were transmitted by Commander, U-boats to U 18 as she returned to Theodosia. At 2223 she attacked an enemy submarine in air grid square 5564, firing a fan-of-three torpedoes. No hits were scored and the misses could not be explained.

U 20 will be alone in the operational area when U 18 returns. Since U 20's harassing action has been successful in the Ghelenjik-Tuapse area (enemy artillery fire and radio report), I intend to send her immediately to the main traffic area between Tuapse and Sukhum.

Approximate position of U 20 at 0900 was air grid square 8550. The boat reported at 1223: "No traffic. Am approaching the coast 3 times during the day and 3 times at night. Heavy air activity. Bombs dropped mostly by planes from great altitudes."

At 1420 U 23 put out from Sevastopol for Constantza in accordance with her sailing orders.

1500 A report was received in Simferopol from 1st Air Corps, stating that the escorted "Prodromos" and "Shell I" tanker convoy, which was proceeding from Constantza to Sevastopol, had been shadowed by an enemy reconnaissance plane from 1143 to 1334 and reported in an intercepted radiogram. The convoy and Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea were informed by the radio station of Admiral, Black Sea. Five SB 2 bombers attacked from 1825 to 1840, dropping 15 to 20 heavy bombs. Impacts about 150 meters from "Shell I", no damage. A single plane approached again at 2005 and machine-gunned the BV 138 which was with the convoy.

In view of the enemy reconnaissance plane's report, it was almost certain that, in addition to planes, the enemy would direct the submarines in the Cape Tarkhankutzki area to the well-known convoy route. The recent air attacks by night in the eastern Crimean sea area indicate that increased danger from the air must be expected on moonlight nights. For these reasons, I advised Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea to have the convoy steer north during the night to pass Cape Tarkhankutzki after daybreak, when our fighters would be able to take care of the situation. At 2336, Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria obtained a bearing on a submarine southwest of Eupatoria, proving that this measure was justified.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, the competent naval shore commanders and the Army command posts received the attached orders (see Appendix) for

the operation by the naval gunnery lighters. I intended that the naval gunnery lighters should operate in 4 groups against the enemy ports on the Sea of Azov and in Taganrog Bay. The motor minesweepers and motor minesweepers (RA) which were to give navigational assistance in these operations received orders to proceed to the jumping-off ports. (The bombardment of the Mius front had already been discussed with the Commanding General.)

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 and 2 minesweepers put out from Temriuk on patrol duty. Naval gunnery lighter No. 10 put in to Temriuk again at 2300 with Commanding General, 49th (Mountain) Army Corps and deputy Naval Port Commander, Temriuk on board.

2306 Two enemy M.T.B.s were sighted 5 miles west of the Anapa mole. The boats made off to the southwest.

Enemy Air Activity:

Enemy planes penetrated to the Danube estuary on the evening of 17 July and the Rumanian picket reported that they dropped single mines.

A few enemy planes flew over Mariupol, dropping a few bombs which caused no damage.

Novorossisk reported a few bombs and artillery and mortar bombardment of the harbor sites and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 swept the area between Kilometers 272 and 286 eight times. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: No operations by 30th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla.

It is planned to continue the sweeping of route Green on 19 July.

Kerch Strait: Minesweeping planes swept the northern entrance to Kerch Strait, while groups with skid gear and towed loop gear swept the route to the new winter harbor 28 times. No mines swept.

Motor minesweeper RA 52 and 3 motor minesweepers (FR) escorted the Anapa convoy. No mines swept.

One plane of 3rd Minesweeping Staffel was temporarily transferred from Galatz to Odessa to speed up minesweeping off Tendra. The transfer

was the result of a request submitted by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea so that the Odessa-Sevastopol towed convoys could run on 19 July.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoy No. 144 ran with 6 naval ferry barges and anti-mine escort. At 1730 convoy No. 145 put out from Kerch as far as Zhelezni Rog with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys: Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 50 put in to Temriuk at 1000 with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 2 lighters. At 1500 the vessels commenced return passage, putting in to Kerch at 2045.

At 1015 Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 43 put in to Genichesk on return passage with 5 naval ferry barges and 1 towing vessel. Convoy No. 44 put out from Genichesk at 1415 with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. The Constantza-Sevastopol tanker convoy was diverted because of the reconnaissance reports (see above).

I ordered that until further notice Crimea convoys should sail by day only, since enemy submarines have always attacked them on moonlight nights and recently aircraft have also been attacking at night. The advantage gained by these surprise attacks is greater at night than by day.

CONFIDENTIAL

19 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 0400 the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 4 vessels entering Ghelenjik.

No enemy shipping was reported in the area off the Caucasus coast by daylight or night air reconnaissance. Ports on the Caucasus coast were not examined.

No enemy shipping was detected in the Sea of Azov.
Primorsko Akhtari at 0702 (aerial photograph): 7 small armed vessels (motor gunboats) and about 60 boats.
Achuevski at 0710 (aerial photograph): about 15 boats, some beached.
Sadki fishery at 0704 (aerial photograph): 35 boats, some beached.

According to radio traffic intercepted by Main Naval D/F Station, 1 probable destroyer put out from Poti or Batum on a northerly course in the early morning. Radio intelligence also discovered that the number of submarines had increased to nine, five of which were in the western Black Sea. Bearings were obtained for the first time on enemy submarines off the Turkish coast north of Zonguldak. These submarines are presumably to operate against our convoy traffic between the Bosporus and the Black Sea.

Own Situation:

Taganrog was again shelled in the course of the night from Pavlo Ochakov. No hits were scored on the town or port area. The town area was shelled at the same time from a range of about 2 miles by 2 unidentified enemy vessels which withdrew under cover of smoke.

0400 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 11 and 2 harbor defense boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duties. Isolated air activity at sea, otherwise nothing to report.

0430 E-boats S 502, S 503 and S 505 put in to Theodosia from operations in the Cape Chauda-Cape Takil area. The boats had been operating since midnight against an enemy submarine reported to be 5 - 10 miles south of Theodosia on an easterly course. They did not sight the submarine.

The way in which the operation was carried out by Commander, 11th E-Boat Flotilla was not quite correct, since the attention of the submarine was probably caught in advance by the movements of our boats. Engine noises might have been heard and in the moonlight they may even have been sighted. Commander, 11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to have the boats wait in lurking positions close to the coast for the enemy to approach in future operations of this kind.

0505 E-boats S 42, S 45 and S 51 put in to Kerch from the reconnaissance line in the southeastern Sea of Azov. No enemy vessels had been sighted.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light winds, mainly W, sea wind in the afternoon, mainly fair, visibility after early mist 15 miles.

The naval meteorological station intends to lay a meteorological buoy in 43° 55' N, 36° 20' E. The laying of this buoy is primarily in the nature of an experiment, but, should this test have good results, other buoys will be laid to help fill in the gaps in the weather reports from the southeastern Black Sea. According to previous experience, the lack of weather reports from Turkey and the Caucasus area is particularly disadvantageous.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to lay the first meteorological buoy in 43° 55' N, 36° 20' E (70 miles south of Cape Takil) on the night of 19/20 July. S 26 was to bring it from Constantza. Three boats were to carry out this operation and then return in patrol line formation. Anti-submarine operations permitted.

Three boats put out from Ivan Baba at 1830.

All available boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were again ordered to occupy lurking positions south of Kerch Peninsula on both sides of Cape Opuk.

They were to take up position directly off the coast. Anti-submarine operations were the main aim.

Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast and Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus were ordered to prevent any of our convoys from passing through the operational area at night.

Approximate U-boat positions: U 20 in air grid square 9449 and U 23 in air grid square 1570. No reports from the operational area. U 18 put

in to Theodosia at 0645, while U 23 entered Constantza at 2100.

Owing to lack of tugs, the transfer of the base of 1st Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla and the midget submarines themselves was postponed until 21 July.

0945 Motor minesweeper R 33 was set on fire in Yalta harbor by a direct bomb hit. Her ammunition caught fire and she sank at 1113 after a loud explosion. One of the crew was seriously wounded and 2 more were slightly wounded.

Motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 put in to Kerch from Mariupol at 1330 to take part in the offensive operations planned for 20/21 July. Motor minesweeper R 166 put in to Temriuk from Kerch at 1400.

"Ship 19" is on passage from Sevastopol to Constantza for repairs, as her search gear broke down again.

1945 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 10 and 8 harbor defense boats put out from Temriuk for the patrol line. Six combined operations boats remained in port because of the weather, but put out at 2100 after the weather improved.

Enemy Air Activity:

On the night of 18/19 July, Naval Port Commander, Ak Mechet reported that 2 planes had penetrated to the area near Karacha at 2215 and machine-gunned the Naval Signal Station. Several explosions were later heard at sea, probably bombs.

They might possibly have been the planes which had been dispatched against the "Tisza" convoy (Sevastopol-Constantza) and had failed to find it.

Two planes flew over Ivan Baba at 2320. Twelve bombs were dropped without causing any damage. The anti-aircraft guns had no visible success. There was an air raid on Yalta at 0945. Motor minesweeper R 33 was sunk by a direct bomb hit (see above). More bombs were dropped on the town area but no serious damage was caused. Novorossisk reported the usual artillery and mortar fire. No bombs.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear swept route Green six times. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: The FZ-group swept the route to the new winter harbor 14 times, while minesweeping planes covered the route from Kerch to Temriuk five times. No mines swept.

Three motor minesweepers (FR) acted as anti-mine escort for Anapa convoy No. 145. No mines were cut.

Danube estuary: Minesweeping activity by motor minesweepers R 196, R 197 and R 209. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoy No. 145 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 146 put out from Kerch at 1725 with 5 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys: At 1915 Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 51 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 44 ran as scheduled with 4 naval ferry barges.

d. Crimea convoys and the convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

20 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Slight supply traffic to the beachhead. The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted only 1 vessel off Sapun at 0250.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Sukhum. Reconnaissance was impossible further south because of the weather. At 0520 1 small armed vessel, course southeast, was sighted 3 miles south of Tuapse; at 0550 several large boats, course northwest, 3 miles southeast of Gudauty; at 0600 2 motor minesweepers and 2 patrol vessels, course southwest, off Sukhum; at 0602 1 freighter of 800 tons and 2 patrol vessels, course southeast, 6 miles south of Sukhum; at 0605 1 patrol boat, course west, 12 miles south of Sukhum; at 0715 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, 5 miles west of Sochi; at 0720 4 M.T.B.s, course northwest, 10 miles northeast of Tuapse; at 0610 1 coastal vessel of 500 tons, course southwest, 18 miles southwest of Ochemchiri; at 0738 2 coastal vessels and 2 motor minesweepers, course southeast, off Dzhubg anchorage.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0749 (aerial photograph): 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,200 tons, 10 motor minesweepers, 23 M.T.B.s and 65 small boats.
Tuapse at 0520 (aerial photograph): 2 freighters, each 800 tons, 8 coastal vessels totaling 2,400 tons, 1 minesweeper, 2 M.T.B.s and 15 small boats.
Sochi at 0718 (aerial photograph): 8 motor minesweepers, 1 small armed vessel and 20 boats.
Sukhum at 0600 (oblique view): 2 freighters, each 800 tons, and several boats.

No enemy shipping traffic in the Sea of Azov.
Primorsko Akhtari at 0605 (aerial photograph): 8 small armed vessels, apparently all motor gunboats, and about 90 small boats, some beached.
Achuevski at 0612 (aerial photograph): 15 boats, some beached.

No heavy surface forces were detected from radio traffic by Main Naval D/F Station. Normal patrol vessel activity and supply traffic off the Caucasus coast. Submarines detected: 4 in the western Black Sea and another in an unidentified position.

It may be assumed that the submarines which were located in the southwestern Black Sea near the Turkish coast on 19 July had orders to operate against our Bosporus-Constantza convoys. Our shipping was warned accordingly by Commander, Convoys and Escorts.

On the Army front, repeated enemy attacks in strength of up to 2 battalions with minor tank support were repulsed with heavy losses for the enemy. Enemy supply traffic behind the front continues to be heavy.

Own Situation:

About midnight, bearings were obtained by Anapa radar station on an enemy M.T.B. in the northwest near point 21 on route Brown. Renewed enemy minelaying is suspected. Anapa convoy No. 146, which is due to sail in the morning, was informed by radiogram.

0400 Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9 and 10 and 13 boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Apart from lively air activity, they had nothing to report.

0415 E-boats S 26, S 47 and S 52 put in to Ivan Baba from operations. Meteorological buoy No. 112 had been laid according to plan. No enemy vessels were sighted by the boats as they returned in reconnaissance line formation.

0505 In accordance with orders, S 502, S 503 and S 505 of 11th E-Boat Flotilla had been in lurking positions off the coast between Cape Chauda and Cape Takil: S 503 near the Elchan Kaya cliffs, S 505 off Cape Opuk and S 503 3 miles east of Cape Opuk. The boats were very economical in the use of their engines, but they sighted no enemy vessels. They commenced return passage at 0310 and all boats put in to Theodosia at 0505.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light winds from inland at night, sea wind throughout the day up to force 5, fair, visibility after morning mist 15 miles.

Since the Russians had started to attack along the whole eastern front, any naval operations to bring relief to the Army would be welcome. For a long time I have been planning a single large-scale operation in which many points would be attacked simultaneously to deceive the enemy

regarding the actual weakness of the German Navy. If boats appeared off all the ports on the Sea of Azov, we would be bound to catch light enemy naval forces.

I intended to bombard the following places:

a. The Mius front, to give direct relief to the right flank of Army Group South.

b. The ports of Yeisk, Primorsko Akhtari and Achuevski, to corner the enemy naval forces and to draw the enemy's artillery from the front to the ports.

Simultaneous actions were also planned at several places on the Caucasus coast (Myshako, Mesib estuary and Vulan valley, with shelling of their jetties etc.). As the naval gunnery lighters always need navigational aid because of their deficient compasses and we do not have 2 motor minesweepers (RA) available for operations, motor minesweeper R 30 and the last available boat of the Crimea group will have to be drawn into the operation. This means that the Crimea group will not be available for the action at Myshako. Since the moon phase is not very favorable for the Myshako operation, I am canceling it. On the basis of recent experience, the thrust against the Mesib estuary does not promise much success either, so I decided to deploy the 2 E-boat groups in lurking positions south of Idoko within the framework of this large-scale operation; if they are successful here, it will mean that our large-scale plan is also realized.

In accordance with operational orders (Chefs.) based on the above considerations and dated 18 July (see Appendix to War Diary 18 July), the following operational groups left their bases:

1030 Motor minesweeper R 166 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 11 put out from Temriuk to operate against Primorsko Akhtari.

1200 Motor minesweeper R 30 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 9 and 10 put out from Temriuk to operate against Achuevski.

1500 Motor minesweeper RA 51 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 3 and 4 put out from Mariupol to operate against Yeisk. (With the aim of screening this operation, the group sailed with the routine Mariupol-Taganrog supply convoy.)

2200 Motor minesweeper RA 56 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 put out to operate against

the enemy coastal sector on the Mius front east of Varenovka.

Six boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to operate close to the Caucasus coast off the Vulan valley and the Dzhubg estuary.

The boats lying in Kerch (S 42, S 45, S 51) put out at 1345, while those in Ivan Baba (S 26, S 52, S 72) sailed at 1430. S 26 was dismissed to Ivan Baba at 1540 because her port engine failed. The 2 groups met at 1721. An enemy plane shadowed the formation from 1800, disappearing in an easterly direction at 1920. Assuming that the operational plans had been intercepted by the reconnaissance plane, Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla decided to operate against the Myshako beachhead although such action was contrary to the operational order. After receiving this report, I ordered the E-boats to withdraw from the operational area at midnight at the latest, as our planes planned to attack the Myshako beachhead, Ghelenjik Bay and any vessels in this area at 0200.

As all available boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla had been in action on the last two nights, the flotilla was ordered to spend the coming night in port for necessary overhaul. In any case, the flotilla is not yet fit for the planned large-scale operation.

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 20 in air grid square 0476. U 18 put out from Theodosia at 0745 to return to Constantza. No reports were received from U 20 while at sea.

Short report from U 23 on her first operation from 27 June to 19 July: "No supply traffic was intercepted although we operated off Ochemchiri and Cape Pitsunda close to the shore. Became entangled with wire cables in water 26 meters deep off Cape Iskuria and then observed a patrol vessel. A torpedo was fired at the patrol vessel north of Ochemchiri, but it missed as the vessel altered course. Very heavy air and sea patrol, probably on account of the earlier sinkings achieved in this area. Were pursued with depth charges daily, probably due to oil trace. After the oil tanks were damaged through high pressure caused by cracks in the bulkhead to the main ballast tank, diving was limited to less than 30 meters. Commenced return passage via Sevastopol."

1945 Seven harbor defense boats and 6 combined operations boats put out from Temriuk on coastal patrol.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 1815 the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy, comprising motor minesweeper RA 51 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 3 and 4, was attacked 15 miles east of Mariupol. No damage. Lively air activity over the Crimean coast (Yalta, Balaklava), but no bombs. Planes were observed over the Danube Delta and minelaying is suspected. Novorossisk reported no bombing, but the usual shelling and mortar fire.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green eight times north of the approach buoy. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: The FZ-group with towed loop gear and noise box (turbines) swept the route to the winter harbor twelve times. Minesweeping planes checked the Kerch-Temriuk route five times. No mines swept.

Three motor minesweepers (FR) acted as anti-mine escort to the Anapa convoy. No mines were cut during passage.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran without incident. Due to a delay in unloading, tonnage for 21 July could be expected to drop by about 500 tons.

b. Anapa convoy No. 146 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. At 1800 convoy No. 147 put out from Kerch as far as Cape Takil with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys: Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 51 put in to Temriuk at 0900 with 6 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter (also the damaged motor minesweeper R 30). After unloading, the convoy put out again at 1500 for Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter.

d. At 1500 the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy put out from Mariupol for Taganrog with 4 transport cutters, motor minesweeper RA 51 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 3 and 4. The latter 3 boats were on passage for the special operation.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled without incident.

Transportation figures for 11 - 20 July 1943:

Kerch Strait (tonnage carried by the Navy in brackets):

24,638 tons of supplies (7,082 tons).

Genichesk-Temriuk (by the Navy only):

5,776 tons of supplies.

Kerch-Anapa (by the Navy only):

4,208 tons of supplies.

Kerch-Temriuk (by the Navy only):

4,347 tons of supplies.

Theodosia-Taman (by the Navy only):

2,585 tons of supplies.

Total: 41,554 tons of supplies.

Navy's share: 23,998 tons of supplies.

Timber transports from Yalta to Kerch:

530 tons.

CONFIDENTIAL

21 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Between 2200 and 2230, the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on Myshako mountain sighted 7 vessels discharging cargo at landing point 3. These vessels were shelled by our own artillery from 2340 to 0030. Seven more enemy vessels off landing point 4 shelled our own artillery positions with about 20 rounds from 7.5 cm. guns.

Air reconnaissance reported no shipping traffic in the Caucasus coast area. Enemy shipping in the ports was not checked. No enemy shipping in the Sea of Azov.

Three medium freighters were sighted off the Turkish coast in the southwestern Black Sea.

Main Naval D/F Station detected no surface forces at sea from radio traffic. Submarines detected: 3 in the western Black Sea, 2 in unidentified positions and another 30 miles west of Poti. According to Main Naval D/F Station, the latter was the submarine on which bearings were taken on 19 July in the southwestern Black Sea.

Further counter-attacks on the Army front were repulsed west of Krimskaya and the enemy suffered heavy losses.

Own Situation:

0015 Anapa radar station detected 4 vessels, probably M.T.B.s, on a northerly course 3 miles west of Anapa. After being shelled by the anti-aircraft guns, they turned off to the west.

On the night of 20/21 July, the enemy Azov coast was bombarded as ordered by 4 groups, each comprising 2 naval gunnery lighters. The following places were shelled:

1. Varenovka (Mius front - operation "Memel").

2. Yeisk (operation "Jever").

3. Primorsko Akhtari (operation "Pillau").

4. Achuevski (operation "Amsterdam").

The action reports were as follows:

1. At 2300 naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 and motor minesweeper RA 56 under the command of Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla started to bombard the Mius front east of Varenovka. Army artillery also took part. A violent explosion was observed at 2306 and 2 more fires were seen during the course of the action. The boats ceased fire at 2323. Ammunition used: 380 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. No countermeasures, no casualties. The formation put in to Taganrog at midnight.

   I have ordered a repetition of this operation for the coming night. Execution is to be one hour later because of the moon and the boats should strive to use up all their ammunition.

2. The bombardment of Yeisk was carried out by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 3 and 4 and motor minesweeper RA 51 from 2310 to 2332. The boats were under the command of Lieutenant Richter of the staff of Naval Shore Commander, Ukraine. At 2305 2 enemy vessels were sighted near the coast from a fair range, but they were not shelled as they withdrew to the east at full speed and, in view of the range and the enemy speed, it seemed useless to attempt to attack. A large searchlight was put out of action by accurate shelling at the beginning of the bombardment. The enemy defensive fire was therefore scattered and ineffective. The effect of our own shelling was an explosion in the vicinity of the searchlight, 2 fires east of the harbor, one of which was a large fire of an explosive nature with thick smoke (probably an oil or grain store). The town area was accurately shelled, but the harbor could not be examined because of mist. Ammunition used: 430 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. No hits were scored on our formation and there were no casualties. One gun broke down temporarily aboard one of the naval gunnery lighters. The formation put in to Mariupol at 0515.

The operation was facilitated by the correct timing as arranged in the operational order to suit the moon phase. Although sighting conditions were very good, our formation was not identified by the enemy until the bombardment had started. The naval gunnery lighters were obviously not detected when putting out from Mariupol as they were screened as vessels escorting the Taganrog convoy. This convoy was however attacked at 1815.

3. The bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari was carried out by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8 and 11 and motor minesweeper R 166 from 2316 to 2339. The boats were under the command of Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla. Results: a. One enemy patrol vessel was badly damaged by R 166 and had to be beached in flames. b. Two fires, including a large fire in the town area, were started by the naval gunnery lighters. c. One strong searchlight was put out of action by accurate fire from the naval gunnery lighters using 8.8 cm. guns. The cease-fire came at 2339, when all the 8.8 cm. guns aboard the naval gunnery lighters had broken down (see below). The naval gunnery lighters were then ordered to withdraw to the open sea. R 166 approached the harbor to attack a large vessel. Six motor gunboats were then seen putting out at maximum speed (about 25 knots). The enemy was attempting to reach the side of the formation away from the moon, but this maneuver was prevented by R 166. The enemy made 4 attacks between 0014 and 0215 which our formation evaded merely by maneuvering and using one 3.7 cm. gun and 2 cm. guns. The enemy armament was far superior as each boat had two 7.5 cm. guns and several machine-guns. Their speed was also greater. One gunboat was set on fire in the fourth attack and she dropped astern. The enemy attempted to force our formation into Achuevski Bay, but the boats turned towards the enemy and thwarted their plan. The enemy then scattered and disappeared. In the first attack, 2 direct hits from 7.5 cm. guns were scored on the bridge and radio cabin aboard R 166 which was again damaged later. The V.H.F. set was put out of action and the H.F. radio broke down temporarily. The chart room, the radio cabin, the heads and the commander's cabin were destroyed. Casualties: Aboard R 166: 2 men killed and 1 man wounded. Aboard naval gunnery lighter No. 11: 2 men wounded.

Admiral, Black Sea could not be informed of the situation by the flotilla commander as intended because of the radio breakdown aboard R 166. An attempt at transmission by a naval gunnery lighter was also unsuccessful, otherwise the group further south might have been brought into the action.

On return passage, 4 enemy ground-attack planes were sighted at 0410. They turned off at a very high altitude after we attacked them. Two of our fighters joined the formation at 0415. They flew straight for

the formation and did not break off until the boats showed recognition signals. Identification was difficult and, because they looked similar to the earlier single-engined ground-attack planes, we shelled them at first without effect. The formation put in to Temriuk at 0845.

The ruthless operating of the motor minesweeper and the superior, successful command of the formation by Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla deserve boundless praise. (According to information from 1st Air Corps, the enemy ground-attack planes sighted at 0410 were also our own fighters.) Examination of the 8.8 cm. guns of the naval gunnery lighters revealed that the rate of fire had been too fast during the bombardment, resulting in great heat, foam and, due to the high pressure, leakage of the brake fluid. Hence there was a very strong recoil of the barrels and further firing became impossible. A detailed examination of the guns will be made.

For the time being, I ordered that in operations by naval gunnery lighters against land targets a slower rate of fire should be maintained; there must be at least 15 seconds between salvoes. We are trying to obtain reserve recoil cylinders to make replacement possible.

4. The shelling of Achuevski was carried out by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 9 and 10 and motor minesweeper R 30 under the command of the deputy group commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla. The action began at 2313. Shore batteries started firing at 2321 (probably 4.5 cm. and perhaps 8.8 cm. guns) and there was also machine-gunfire. The enemy guns found too short a range and no hits were scored. No casualties. Ceased fire at 2339.

   The formation withdrew under a smoke screen put up by R 30. The shore guns ceased fire at 2353. While withdrawing, a fire was observed on land. Further results could not be observed because of the heavy mist over the coast. The formation put in to Temriuk at 0445.

The course of operation "Pillau" again confirmed that the Russian Navy has successfully transferred by land to the Sea of Azov a large number of fast vessels of high endurance. The enemy motor gunboats with their speed of 25 knots are considerably faster than our naval gunnery lighters; they are also more seaworthy and, with their two 7.5 cm. guns and machine-guns, their armament is roughly

equal. As I already said (see War Diary 18 July, 0930), it will also be necessary in future to deploy our E-boats from time to time in the Sea of Azov against these enemy boats despite their inferior armament, if possible in cooperation with naval gunnery lighters.

0400 Six harbor defense vessels and 6 combined operations boats put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Nothing to report.

0400 Five boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from operations. The decision of the flotilla commander to make for the beachhead when an enemy reconnaissance plane was sighted (see War Diary 20 July) was contrary to the operational order and did not result in shaking off the enemy. Three planes, probably Bostons, dropped 16 - 18 bombs on the formation at 1957. The bombs were outmaneuvered without casualties or damage. At 2200 the formation stopped 1.5 miles south of Myshako from where the coast was clearly visible in the moonlight. No supply traffic was sighted.

Two or 3 submarine chasers and 5 or 6 M.T.B.s were identified between Suchuk headland and Cape Doob, but they were not attacked as it was impossible in the bright moonlight to approach to machine-gun range.

The decision of the deputy flotilla commander was not in accordance with orders and, owing to a radio failure, the radiogram sent to Admiral, Black Sea arrived too late for me to take any action. We already knew that, at the hour in question, both the phase and the position of the moon were unfavorable for operations against Myshako. Even if the reconnaissance plane had sighted the approaching boats, the ultimate destination of the boats after dark could not have been surmised. I cannot understand why the E-boats sighted no enemy shipping when they were so near the coast on a moonlit night, while the observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk on Myshako mountain intercepted 14 enemy vessels during that period, including 2 large warships off landing points 3 and 4.

The E-boats were ordered to commence return passage at 2345 because our planes were about to attack (see War Diary 20 July). They complied with the order.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Crimean and Caucasus coasts: Light variable winds, winds from the land at night, sea wind

throughout the day, fair, visibility after morning mist 15 miles.

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 20 in air grid square 0470 and U 18 in air grid square 2570.

No reports were received from U-boats at sea. U 18 was informed of the possibility of meeting S 49. Again fully operational, S 49 had put out from Constantza for Ivan Baba at 1630 and would be proceeding in the opposite direction. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported his plan for the Italian midget submarines to put out for Sevastopol on 22 July.

1128 Kerch reported that combined operations ferry No. 423, which was on passage to Senaya, had sunk off Taman harbor after her ammunition cargo exploded. In the circumstances, there seems to be no question of mines. The explosion was probably caused by fire in the exhaust or possibly it was the result of sabotage. The crew was picked up by a naval ferry barge.

1625 At 1625 1 mile south of Cape Zhelezni Rog, Anapa convoy No. 147, which was on return passage, was attacked by 11 ground attack planes which dropped about 60 medium and small bombs. Through the interference of our fighters, the bombs were jettisoned. No casualties, no damage. One plane was shot down by naval ferry barge F 340 and 5 planes were brought down by fighters.

1915 The patrol line off the Kuban estuary was today occupied by naval ferry barges F 418 and F 217 and harbor defense vessels instead of naval gunnery lighters. When putting out from Temriuk at 1915, the rudder of naval gunnery lighter No. 10 was damaged by a naval ferry barge. The boat can be repaired in Temriuk.

2025 Anapa sighted 4 enemy M.T.B.s in 2 groups 2 and 7 miles off the coast to the northwest. The boats were proceeding north at high speed.

Enemy Air Activity:

Lively air reconnaissance activity over the southern Crimea (Yalta and Balaklava). No bombs were dropped.

Six bombs were dropped on the southern sector at Novorossisk and, in addition to this, there was artillery and mortar bombardment of the sites at the east harbor. Planes were heard out at sea northeast of Bugaz at 2230. Two explosions were heard but no planes were sighted. They may have been dropping mines.

Minesweeping Activity:

Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 swept the Danube near Galatz. No mines reported.

Sevastopol: The group with towed loop gear swept route Green six times from the approach buoy northwards. No mines swept.

Kerch Strait: Minesweeping planes swept the Kerch-Temriuk route four times without result. Motor minesweepers (FR) and motor minesweeper RA 54 provided anti-mine escort for the Anapa convoy. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled. For the total loss of a combined operations ferry, see above.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 147 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. (For air attack, see above.) At 1710 convoy No. 148 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 52 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 45 ran with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 towing vessel and 1 lighter.

d. At 1440 the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy put out for Taganrog with 2 tugs, 2 lighters and 7 transport cutters, escorted by naval gunnery lighter No. 3 and 2 harbor defense boats.

e. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran without incident.

CONFIDENTIAL

22 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported no shipping movements.

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum. The following vessels were detected: at 0635 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, and 1 small coastal vessel, course northwest, 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0704 1 towed convoy totaling 600 tons, course south, and 2 patrol vessels 5 miles south of Tuapse; at 0707 1 motor minesweeper, course northwest, off Tuapse; at 0721 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons, course south, 5 miles south of Adler; at 0807 1 motor minesweeper, course southeast, 12 miles west of Ochemchiri; at 0757 1 coastal vessel, course south, 10 miles south of Ochemchiri; at 0751 1 destroyer and 1 minesweeper, course east, 18 miles west of Poti.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0652: 2 freighters, each 500 tons, one with steam up, 4 coastal vessels totaling 1,200 tons, 11 motor minesweepers, 24 M.T.B.s and 55 boats.
Tuapse at 0635: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 1 freighter of 800 tons, 5 coastal vessels totaling 1,500 tons, one with steam up, 1 minesweeper, 4 M.T.B.s beached, 1 small armed vessel, 1 floating crane and 20 boats.
Ochemchiri at 0801: 2 submarine tenders of 2,000 and 1,000 tons respectively, 2 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons and 2 submarines.
Poti at 0750 (oblique view): 1 battleship, 2 heavy cruisers and 1 vessel, probably a tanker, of 7,000 tons.

Daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea was uneventful.

The following vessels were sighted by daylight reconnaissance in the Sea of Azov: at 0745 2 small coastal vessels, course northwest, off Achuevski; at 0735 1 small armed vessel, course northwest, putting out from Primorsko Akhtari. An aerial photograph of Yeisk harbor showed 4 small armed vessels, 1 coastal vessel of 200 tons and 40 boats, some beached, at 0710. Enemy shipping in Primorsko Akhtari at 0735: 6 small armed vessels and about 90 boats, some beached. Achuevski (aerial photograph): apart from the 2 small coastal vessels off the estuary mentioned

above, 17 boats were identified, some beached. On preliminary evaluation, target photographs of Yeisk, Primorsko Akhtari and Achuevski revealed no new destruction.

Enemy attacks were launched at the Kuban bridge-head after softening-up by artillery.

Main Naval D/F Station intercepted no activity of large naval vessels. Submarines detected: 2 in unidentified positions in the western Black Sea including the Crimean area and 2 more at sea.

Own Situation:

0000 Naval ferry barge F 418 reported to Temriuk that she had heard suspicious engine noises in the patrol line. Two naval ferry barges headed for this area and at 0010 were shelled with 7.5 cm. guns from a range of 2,600 to 3,000 meters. The barges opened fire at the same time with 7.5 cm. and 2 cm. guns. The enemy ceased fire at 0015 and the naval ferry barges made off. While withdrawing, engine noises were again heard astern but no further contact was made with the enemy. The naval ferry barges were again in position at 0045. Neither our guns nor the enemy's scored any successes. From the gun flashes, there must have been 2 or 3 enemy motor gunboats concerned.

0055 In accordance with orders, the enemy coast east of Varenovka was again shelled by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1 and 2 and motor minesweeper RA 56 under the command of Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla. The boats reached their positions at 0055 and immediately opened fire. The impacts landed in the prescribed area and a large fire was observed. The cease-fire came at 0115. During the first 10 minutes, the formation was unsuccessfully shelled by a heavy shore battery. Ammunition used: 330 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. The formation put in to Taganrog as scheduled.

0430 E-boat S 49 put in to Ivan Baba from Constantza. S 40 was transferred from Kerch to Ivan Baba; she put out from Kerch at 1625 and entered Ivan Baba at 1930. S 42 had orders to proceed from Ivan Baba to Constantza, but the passage had to be postponed because of the weather (NW winds, force 6 - 8). As the weather was unsuitable for action and 6 boats were to operate against Myshako on 23 July, 1st E-Boat Flotilla had a night in port on 22/23 July.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 1000):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk: S - SW winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon, light variable winds again in the evening, fair, visibility 15 miles, morning mist.

Weather will deteriorate during the night, thunderstorms, SW - NW winds, force 5 - 6, in squalls up to force 8. Convoy traffic will thus be very restricted.

All operational boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to take up lurking positions off Cape Utrich on the night of 22/23 July. Approach on route Brown via points 17 and 18a, then north of route Brown close to the coast as far as off Anapa and from there at a distance of 1 mile from the coast to Cape Utrich. Departure should be timed to pass Anapa at 2000. Return passage to Anapa half an hour before dawn. Anti-submarine operations permitted. Naval Shore Commander and the Air Force were informed. Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put out at 1705, as ordered, to carry out the operation.

This operation should make it possible to intercept the enemy forces which have been regularly observed north of Anapa on outward or return passage, without making it necessary to sail from Anapa. Naval Radio Station, Anapa was to tune to the E-boat frequency so that they could immediately transmit enemy reports direct to the flotilla. The operation is also meant to be a training exercise for the boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla, which do not have much operational experience.

Approximate U-boat positions at 0800: U 18 putting in to Constantza and U 20 in air grid square 9460. No reports at night, no sightings at sea. U 19 and U 24 reported ready for action for 24 July.

On the basis of the experiences of U 18 and U 23, I planned to station one boat in the "Tapir" area and the other in the "Schlange" area. I have observed the periodicity of the traffic and am ensuring that both starting points and final destinations of convoys are patrolled. The boats will remain submerged on the outward routes throughout the day. The central "Puma-Antilope" area where U 20 is now operating will have to be unpatrolled for a certain time.

The first convoy of 1st Italian Midget Submarine Flotilla, comprising CB 1 and CB 2 towed by "Stralsund", put out from Constantza for Sevastopol at 0650. The vessels were escorted by submarine chasers Nos. 2305 and 2306. At 0825 "Varna" put out from Constantza with escort. She was carrying material from the base and repair apparatus. Submarine chaser No. 2305 ran aground southwest of St. George at 1900. Weather: wind WSW, force 5 - 6, squally. Tug "Stralsund" remained behind to assist her. At 2330 submarine chaser No. 2306 put in to Sulina with the 2 midget submarines because of weather. She put out again immediately to assist submarine chaser No. 2305. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea is arranging further measures for the salvage of submarine chaser No. 2305. All attempts to tow her off have so far been unsuccessful.

1612 From 1612 to 1700, the Crimea convoy proceeding from Sevastopol to Theodosia was attacked off Sudak by 9 bombers. They flew in in 3 waves from an altitude of 3,000 to 2,500 meters, dropping a total of 64 bombs. Our anti-aircraft guns were useless because of the planes' high altitude.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 217, naval gunnery lighter No. 10 (at operational readiness since 1800), harbor defense vessels RK 01, RK 03, RK 04 and RT 02, 4 minesweepers and 6 assault boats put out from Temriuk for patrol duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

Lively air activity at sea in the forenoon. The town and harbor of Yalta were attacked at 1230 and 1247 from an altitude of 2,200 to 3,000 meters. About 70 bombs were dropped in all. No casualties and no damage to Service property.

The frequent air attacks on Yalta make this port even more unsuitable as an intermediate harbor while the Air Force is not in a position to provide additional anti-aircraft protection.

For the air attack on the Crimea convoy, see above. About 2100, there were unidentified planes circling approximately 35 miles south of Sevastopol. The convoy was warned. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported an air attack with about 20 bombs and machine-gunfire on the southern sector. There was also artillery, anti-tank and mortar bombardment of the southern sector and sites at the east harbor. Enemy artillery fired about 100 rounds at Taganrog in the evening and during the night of 21/22 July. Impacts near the harbor. Several

enemy planes flew over and dropped a few bombs. No damage was reported.

Minesweeping Activity:

Kerch: Motor minesweeper RA 54 and 3 motor minesweepers (FR) swept route Brown ahead of Anapa convoy No. 148. Two moored mines were cut off Zheleznl Rog. Four check sweeps were carried out by minesweeping planes east of the coastal route from point 6 to Brown 17, no mines swept. Motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 were ordered to transfer from Mariupol to Kerch.

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green six times from the approach point northwards as far as the 40-meter line and eastwards as far as the minefield. No mines swept.

Tendra: The route from Green 30 to TS 1 was reopened to traffic after minesweeping planes had swept it 23 times to a breadth of 200 meters. The minesweeping planes were then transferred to Galatz.

Danube: Minesweeping planes swept 1 mine at Mile 3, 1 at Mile 9 and 1 at Mile 35. A drifting horned mine was exploded by rifle fire 1 mile north of Bugaz.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait ran without incident.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 148 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. Convoy No. 149 put out from Kerch at 1830.

c. Temriuk convoys:

Kerch-Temriuk convoy No. 52 and Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 45 ran as scheduled. At 1315 convoy No. 46 put out from Genichesk for Temriuk.

d. The Taganrog convoy put in to Taganrog at 0650 with 2 tugs, 2 lighters, 6 transport cutters, motor minesweeper RA 56 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 2 and 3. Transport cutter No. 2295 ran aground off Kriva Kossa and motor minesweeper RM 7 remained behind to assist. The cutter was towed off by RM 7 and put in to Mariupol at 0950.

e. Apart from the air attack off Sudak (see above), Crimea convoys ran as scheduled. Some convoys in the western Black Sea were held up by the uncertain weather.

CONFIDENTIAL

23 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

No shipping movements were reported by Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk.

No reconnaissance reports were received from the Caucasus coast or the eastern Black Sea. Daylight reconnaissance sighted no enemy vessels in the central or northwestern Black Sea. Because of the weather, only part of the Sea of Azov was examined; no enemy shipping movements were detected.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported intercepting radio traffic from 2 submarines in the western Black Sea during the day. At night radio monitoring established 1 destroyer in the Batum area. Submarines detected: 1 in the western Black Sea, 1 in the area southwest of the Crimea and 2 in the eastern Black Sea. Normal activity of small vessels.

After heavy shelling, the enemy unsuccessfully attacked our positions at the Kuban bridgehead as on the previous day.

Own Situation:

0400 Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Anapa. They had examined the Anapa-Utrich area without sighting any enemy vessels. 11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the operation off Utrich on the night of 23/24 July. Sailing from Anapa was planned for 2015, return passage to Theodosia via route Brown to be commenced half an hour before dawn. At 2120 11th E-Boat Flotilla reported that sailing had been postponed because of the weather (SW winds, force 5, in squalls even stronger). All 3 boats were ordered to remain in Anapa, if they were unable to sail by 2300 because of the weather. As weather conditions did not improve by 2300, 11th E-Boat Flotilla remained in Anapa.

0430 The vessels on coastal patrol put in to port. They had nothing to report.

0230 The Mariupol-Taganrog convoy was attacked by a plane 23 miles southwest of Taganrog. Three men were wounded on board motor minesweeper RA 56. The plane was not identified.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 1000):

Eupatoria - Kerch: SSW winds, force 5 - 6, squally, wind veering around W - NW and abating, thundery squalls, visibility 20 miles.

1030 Commanding General, Group South arrived in the zone of Admiral, Black Sea. Inspections in Nikolaiev: Naval Communications Office, personnel office, the north dockyard, the south dockyard, naval fitting-out depot and harbor. He will stay with Naval Port Commander.

Since, according to a telephone report from Army Group South, the Army greatly appreciated the shelling of the Mius front, I decided to repeat the operation several times, as long as the enemy continued to attack there. Motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56, which were needed to give navigational assistance to the naval gunnery lighters, were therefore ordered to proceed to Kerch.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to repeat the shelling of the enemy Mius front east of Varenovka on the night of 24/25 July with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweeper RA 56 ("Memel 3"). After carrying out this operation, the formation should call at Taganrog. Since Taganrog has been shelled more often in the last few days, they are at liberty to anchor northeast of Kossa Petrushina to avoid any losses.

No reports from U 20 from the operational area. U 24 reported ready for action at 0600 on 26 July. Italian midget submarines CB 1 and CB 2 arrived in Sulina. The attempts to tow off submarine chaser No. 2305, which ran aground when transferring the Italian midget submarine convoy, have been unsuccessful. Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea has sent 3 tugs and the attempts are being continued.

1300 1st Air Corps reported that their H.Q. and Operations Division are being transferred to Kerch for the duration of the heavy battles on the eastern front.

1700 Six boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba to carry out operation "Feuerzauber" (see War Diary 19 July). When the Air Force canceled the operation because of the weather, I left the execution of the naval operation to the discretion of the flotilla commander. He was to assess the prevailing weather there and then act as he thought best. Despite fairly bad conditions, the flotilla commander attacked the

Myshako landing points from 2222 to 2232 in accordance with his orders.

1945 Naval gunnery lighter No. 10, naval ferry barges F 418 and F 217, 8 boats and 6 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the attack on the Mariupol-Taganrog convoy, there were no air attacks on convoys or naval forces. Planes penetrated to Mariupol several times during the evening and night of 22/23 July, but no bombs were dropped.

Taganrog: Enemy planes penetrated several times in the evening and during the night, dropping a total of 8 bombs on the town and harbor. In addition, shelling of the town was reported from 2320 to 2330 (30 rounds). A store shed in the harbor was damaged by a bomb. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported no air activity, but the usual artillery, mortar and anti-tank bombardment of the sites at the east harbor and southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Varna: The Varna-Constantza route was swept with gear by motor minesweepers R 196 and R 197. No mines were swept. Three Bulgarian minesweepers swept Varna-North, while boats BW 1, BW 2 and BW 4 and 3 Bulgarian motor minesweepers checked Varna-South. No mines were swept.

Ochakov: 1 mine with 6 horns was exploded by rifle fire 2 miles west of Beresanski.

One drift mine was sighted 3 to 4 miles north of Cape Emine. Shipping was warned.

Odessa: Motor minesweeper MR 7, D 8, D 10 and D 15 put out to the east to check the area for mines. Route Green was swept to a breadth of 200 meters from point 27 to the entrance of the Beresanski channel. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green from the approach buoy at Sevastopol northwards as far as the 40-meter line and eastwards as far as the minefield. No mines were swept.

Kerch: Motor minesweepers R 30 and RA 54 and 2 motor minesweepers (FR) escorted the Anapa convoy.

Supply Traffic:

a. Ferry traffic was held up by the bad weather. Tonnage will drop by 200 tons on 24 July, as the naval ferry barges in Taman and Senaya were not promptly unloaded.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 149 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. At 1800 convoy No. 150 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

At 1820 convoy No. 53 put out from Kerch with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 lighter and 1 tug.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 45 ran successfully. At 1400 convoy No. 46 put out from Temriuk for Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges.

e. Sea of Azov:

The Taganrog-Mariupol convoy ran with 13 transport cutters, 1 tug, 3 naval gunnery lighters and 3 motor minesweepers (1 (RA) and 2 (RM)).

f. In general, Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled. The Crimea convoy from Odessa to Sevastopol did not sail because of the weather.

24 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

At 1925 the observation post at Novorossisk sighted 4 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik to the southwest.

Daylight reconnaissance in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov reported no enemy shipping. The Caucasus coast was not examined. According to radio intelligence, there were no large vessels at sea. Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported 1 submarine in the western Black Sea, 1 in the Crimean area and 1 in the southeastern Black Sea.

The enemy continued to attack strongly on the Army front.

Own Situation:

0400 Six boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from operation "Feuerzauber". (See War Diary 19 July.)

They had attacked the Myshako landing places as ordered. S 51 and S 26 each sank a lighter of 400 tons off the beachhead. Each boat fired 2 torpedoes between 2222 and 2225 from a range of 1,000 meters. The target areas were at times clearly visible in the light of Russian flares. The E-boats were not detected in the attack. All torpedoes exploded in the prescribed areas. From the explosions, hits seem to have been scored on the jetties. A surprise attack was made against the landing and unloading places and the stocks from 2226 to 2232. 310 rounds from the 4 cm. guns and 480 rounds from the 2 cm. guns were fired in quick succession and then the boats withdrew. On passage, they were shelled by 7.6 cm. and heavier caliber guns inland. Most of the impacts were short of the boats. Withdrawal at maximum speed was not possible because of SW winds, force 5 - 6.

The Air Force did not participate in the action because of the weather. In accordance with the agreement, the Army made a surprise attack on the torpedoed landing areas at 2300.

No operations by 11th E-Boat Flotilla because of the weather (SW winds, force 5 - 6).

0430 The coastal defense vessels put in to Temriuk from patrol duty. Nothing to report.

0855 Gunboat "Stihi" reported a submarine attack on the "Prodromos" convoy in 44° 52' N, 30° 20' E. One torpedo passed 30 meters ahead of gunboat "Chiculescu". The submarine was unsuccessfully attacked with 5 depth charges. "Ship 19" was at once detailed for anti-submarine operations. She had no success and put in to Constantza at 2340.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 1000):

The weather continues to deteriorate. Eupatoria - Novorossisk: SW - W winds, force 4 - 5, in thunderstorms up to force 6, visibility 15 miles, morning mist.

Operation "Memel 3" had to be postponed for 24 hours because of unfavorable weather (WNW winds, force 6 - 7).

Commanding General, Group South arrived in Simferopol at about 1000.

Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla were ordered to repeat the shelling of Primorsko Akhtari and to attack any outward bound enemy naval forces (see attached operational order).

No reports from U 20 at sea.

U 19 was ordered to sail for the operational area via the northern route on 25 July. 30th U-Boat Flotilla prohibited anti-submarine operations. Submarine chaser No. 2305, which ran aground off St. George, was towed off at 1200. The boat was undamaged and arrived at Sulina at 1700.

The Italian midget submarine convoy, comprising CB 1 and CB 2 towed by "Gastein" and "Stralsund" and escorted by submarine chasers Nos. 2305 and 2306, put out from Sevastopol at 2225, sailing via route Green, DN 2 to 31° 30' E. From there the boats will continue passage alone as far as off Eupatoria, where they will be picked up by escort vessels of Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast and escorted to Sevastopol.

1430 Kerch reported that tug "Höflein" struck a mine (probably ELM) 4.5 miles northeast of Kuchugury just north of the swept channel. The tug had not made allowance for drift in the storm and wind. She sank at once. Eleven men are missing, 6 men were picked up by naval ferry barge F. 445. The barge patrolled the area for a long time helped by a sea rescue plane. Nothing was sighted.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus at once closed route Red to traffic from point 201 to point Z and ordered further minesweeping. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 47 was diverted to Senaya.

Since 1 July 1943, route Red had been swept 12 times for ELM mines from point 201 to point Z and no mines had been found. In the entire sector from point X to point 220 only 2 ELM mines were swept. The area was checked twice for moored mines and 10 to 15 times for ELM mines. The mines were swept 4 or 5 miles northwest of Cape Sjuk.

1945 The patrol boats did not put out from Temriuk because of the weather (WSW - W winds, force 6). They remained ready to put out as soon as weather conditions improved.

Enemy Air Activity:

No air attacks on convoys during the day. One enemy plane flew over Mariupol at 0545. No bombs were dropped. Taganrog was attacked late in the evening on 23 July. Five bombs were dropped in the harbor basin, causing no damage. Taganrog was shelled from 2300 to 2325 on 23 July and about 140 hits were scored in the center of the town, while a few shells landed in the harbor area. Harbor defense vessel RTA 03 was damaged and later sank, but she will be raised for repairs. Buildings in the town area were damaged. Soldiers and civilians were reported killed and wounded. Novorossisk reported no air raids, but the usual artillery and anti-tank bombardment of the site at the east harbor and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

On request from Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, motor minesweeper R 166 was ordered to proceed to Nikolaiev with "Grafenau" for dockyard overhaul.

Sevastopol: The FZ-group with towed loop gear swept route Green four times from the approach point at Sevastopol northwards as far as the 40-meter line and eastwards as far as the mine-field. No mines swept.

Kerch: The group with towed loop gear swept from point 6 to Brown 17 for ground mines. The same route was checked eight times to a breadth of 400 meters by minesweeping planes. No mines swept. Motor minesweeper RA 54 and 1 motor minesweeper (FR) escorted the Anapa convoy.

Supply Traffic:

a. Supply traffic in Kerch Strait was considerably held up by the weather.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 150 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. At 1800 convoy No. 151 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk convoys:

Convoy No. 53 ran with 4 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter. On return passage, tug "Höflein" struck a mine and sank.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 46 ran with 4 naval ferry barges.

e. Sea of Azov: No convoys because of the weather.

f. Some Crimea convoys and convoys in the north-western Black Sea were delayed by the weather, others ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

25 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 4 vessels putting out from Ghelenjik. Eight vessels were observed off landing area B and shelled by our artillery from 2200 to 2240.

Daylight air reconnaissance sighted a submarine 30 miles south of Cape Tarkhankutzki. The plane attacked her without success.

The Caucasus coast was examined as far as Sukhum. Visibility was poor in parts. The following vessels were sighted: at 0655 2 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons, 1 motor minesweeper and 1 guardboat, course northwest, off Ghelenjik; at 0517 1 motor minesweeper and 1 coastal vessel, course southeast, off Sochi.

Enemy shipping in port:

Sochi (partial view): 2 motor minesweepers, 1 coastal vessel and several boats.
Sukhum at 0545: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 2 freighters, each 800 tons, 2 coastal vessels, 2 motor minesweepers and 15 boats.
The other ports were not examined because of the weather and fighter defenses.

The Sea of Azov and the ports could only be partially examined because of the weather. No enemy shipping traffic was detected.

Enemy shipping in port:

Yeisk at 1059: 6 gunboats, 3 coastal vessels and 20 boats, some beached.
Fishery Kamyshevatka at 1118: 45 boats, some beached.
Primorsko Akhtari at 1127 (partial view): 9 gunboats, 2 coastal vessels and 60 boats, some beached.
Sadki at 1129: 8 boats.

No fleet activity according to radio intelligence. Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria intercepted 1 submarine in the western Black Sea and at 2145 located another 15 miles east of Alushta. Naval ferry barges Nos. 448 and 449 were warned. Normal patrol activity off the Caucasus coast.

Own Situation:

0100 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 217 put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty. Small units could not sail because of the weather (W - SW winds, force 4 - 5).

0400 The 2 naval ferry barges put in to Temriuk from coastal defense duty. Nothing to report.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk: W - SW winds, force 4, squally, thunderstorms passing from the west to the east and wind veering NW. No improvement expected for 25 July.

The proposed shelling of Primorsko Akhtari had to be postponed because of the weather.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to carry out the third bombardment of the enemy Mius front east of Varenovka on the night of 25/26 July and, if possible, the boats were to approach from Mariupol to Taganrog screened in a convoy.

1000 Commanding General, Group South arrived in Sevastopol en route for Yalta.

U 19 put out from Constantza for operations at 1400 and proceeded to the prescribed operational area via the northern route. The Italian midget submarine convoy with CB 1 and CB 2 is on passage to Sevastopol.

No reports from U-boats at sea.

1136 Kerch reported that Theodosia-Taman convoy No. 29 was attacked 10 miles southeast of Cape Chauda by 4 twin-engined bombers from an altitude of 500 meters. 25 to 30 small bombs were dropped. No damage or casualties. The enemy planes were forced to withdraw by 2 Me 110 which were with the convoy. The Air Force reported 1 plane shot down. A second attack was made by 5 planes at 1205. Our own fighters took off on receipt of the report from the Freya operator in Anapa, but they were powerless to prevent bombing. The enemy planes were pursued by our fighters as they withdrew. No successes have yet been reported. The bombs landed near the convoy, but caused no damage or casualties. Our own ship's anti-aircraft guns had no success.

1545 The "Swoyswome" convoy was attacked by a submarine 3 miles south of Yalta. She fired 2 torpedoes, one of which "Swoyswome" outmaneuvered so that it

exploded on the shore. The second passed below naval ferry barge No. 329 amidships. All 3 escorting naval ferry barges attacked the submarine with depth charges as scheduled. After the fourth depth charge, a small oil patch was noticed with rising air bubbles close by. All the barges then made for this spot and dropped their remaining depth charges. More air bubbles rose to the surface.

The naval ferry barges had used up all their depth charges and, owing to the well-known shortage of vessels in the Black Sea, there were no submarine chasers or other suitable vessels in the immediate vicinity. It was therefore impossible to continue operations against the submarine.

The destruction of the submarine seems unlikely, as an enemy submarine was intercepted by Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria in the same area a few hours later.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 534, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

No further attacks were carried out apart from the above-mentioned air raids on the convoys. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported shelling of the southern part of the town and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Kerch: Motor minesweeper RA 54 and 2 motor minesweepers (FR) escorted the Kerch-Anapa convoy. Two motor minesweepers (FR) with oropesa gear swept for moored mines from Red 15 to point Z on both sides of the line of buoys to a total breadth of 150 meters. No mines swept. The gear jammed in 45° 27' N, 37° 04' E and the tender of tug "Höflein" was brought up.

Minesweeping planes swept on both sides of Red 16 as far as point Z to a breadth of 400 meters. No mines swept. Two motor minesweepers (FR) and 3 FZ-boats put out at 2030 with skid gear to protect a convoy from ground mines and moored mines on route Red from point 201 as far as point Z.

The group with towed loop gear carried out 6 check sweeps east of point 6 as far as Brown 17. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Loading and unloading were held up by the weather. Because of the delay in unloading, there was a drop of 100 tons in the tonnage carried by combined operations ferries.

b. Anapa convoys:

Kerch-Anapa convoy No. 151 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. At 1820 convoy No. 152 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

No traffic because of the closing of route Red. Convoy No. 53 is in Temriuk. Part of convoy No. 54 was diverted to Taman and Senaya.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 47 put out from Genichesk and was diverted to Senaya because route Red was closed.

e. Sea of Azov:

The Mariupol-Taganrog convoy ran with motor minesweeper RA 56, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3, 1 tug, 1 lighter and 2 motor minesweepers (RM).

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

I have decreed that with immediate effect Crimea convoys will again sail at night. Air attacks on convoys are unlikely in the coming dark nights and, in my opinion, submarine attacks on dark nights are less effective than daylight air raids.

CONFIDENTIAL

26 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported 10 vessels off landing area B and 8 off landing area C at the usual time from 2235 to midnight.

Daylight air reconnaissance sighted no enemy ships in the Black Sea. One Turkish freighter of 1,500 tons was observed off the Turkish coast, 3 miles east of Giresun.

Reconnaissance was difficult in the Sea of Azov because of the weather. No enemy shipping traffic was observed. There were no important changes in shipping in ports and fishery harbors as far as could be seen.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported a destroyer of the "Frunse" class, probably in the southeastern Black Sea, 1 submarine off the southern Crimean coast and another in the southeastern Black Sea.

The enemy attacked again at the Kuban bridgehead with strong tank support, but was repulsed.

Own Situation:

0218 From 0218 to 0240, the third bombardment of the enemy Mius front was carried out by 3 naval gunnery lighters and motor minesweeper RA 56. Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was in command. Hits were scored ashore, causing a fire. Although it was very dark and the moon was partly covered, the shore target area could be seen. No enemy countermeasures. Ammunition used: 740 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. The formation put in to Taganrog at 0340.

0615 Anapa convoy No. 152 was bombed and machine-gunned by 15 enemy planes. About 80 medium and small bombs were dropped but the vessels were not damaged. One man was killed and 1 was wounded. The Freya operator and Anapa radar station promptly reported the enemy planes and they were intercepted by our fighters while they were still over the convoy. Ten enemy planes were shot down by the fighters.

The convoy guns had no success. Another formation of 21 enemy planes southwest of the convoy did not attack.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk: NW winds, force 3, in thunderstorm squalls up to force 5, visibility 15 miles, morning mist.

North coast of the Sea of Azov: NW winds, force 4, light showers, visibility 15 miles.
South coast of the Sea of Azov: NW winds, force 4 - 5, visibility 15 miles.

As the weather is not expected to improve, the proposed bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari by the 2nd group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla in cooperation with 1st E-Boat Flotilla under the command of Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was again postponed for 24 hours.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to carry out the bombardment of the enemy Mius front with the 1st group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla on the night of 26/27 July. The firing of flares to obtain a better view of the target was left to the discretion of the commander. Simultaneous shelling by the Army had been arranged.

No reports were received from U-boats at sea.

At 1400 U 24 put out from Constantza for the operational area via the southern route. U-boats at sea were informed of the sailing of an enemy destroyer of the "Frunse" class.

The first Italian midget submarine convoy with CB 1 and CB 2 put in to Sevastopol at 1205.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the operation ordered off Cape Utrich as soon as the weather improved. Three E-boats put out from Anapa at 2045 to carry out this operation.

Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out for Constantza at 1720 to be repaired. Five boats were at readiness in Ivan Baba to take part in the operation with Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla (see above).

1900 "Ship 19" put out from Ak Mechet for anti-submarine operations in the Cape Tarkhankutzki area.

1920 Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Black Sea reported from Constantza that steamer "Thisbe" had been held in Istanbul by the Turkish authorities and could therefore not put out.

1945 At 1945 naval ferry barges F 534 and F 418, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duties. Naval ferry barge F 418 and 2 boats returned at 2145 because of engine trouble and 2 more boats put in again because of the weather.

Commanding General, Group South returned to Simferopol from Yalta and is proceeding to Sofia.

Enemy Air Activity:

Apart from the above-mentioned air raid on Anapa convoy No. 152, there were no air attacks.

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the usual shelling of the southern part of the town.

During the night, an armored train stationed between Primorska and Morskaya fired 45 rounds on the town of Taganrog. No damage was caused in Naval Port Commander's area.

Minesweeping Activity:

Varna: 3 boats swept Varna-North and route Red without result.

Odessa: 5 motor minesweepers (FR) checked route Green with gear from Constantza to Odessa. No mines swept.

Kerch: Motor minesweeper RA 54 and 2 motor minesweepers (FR) escorted Anapa convoys Nos. 151 and 152. They swept 1 mine on route Brown, 13 miles northwest of Anapa.

Minesweeping planes swept both sides of route Red to a breadth of 200 meters between points 15, 16, 201 and Z. The area was covered four times. No mines swept.

Motor minesweepers RA 51 and RA 56 received orders to proceed in turn to Mariupol dockyard for repairs.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Unloading had to be stopped for about 1 hour because of very heavy rain. Unloading dropped behind schedule in Taman owing to lack of goods trucks. Tonnage can be expected to drop by 400 tons as vessels are still delayed in Temriuk because of the danger of mines. A further drop of 550 tons was caused by a delay in unloading the combined operations ferries.

b. Kerch-Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 152 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. For air raid, see above. Convoy No. 153 put out from Kerch at 1800.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

No traffic because the route was closed.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 47, which ran with 5 naval ferry barges, 1 tug and 1 lighter, was diverted to Taman and Senaya.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 2015 Berdyansk-Kerch convoy No. 5 put out from Berdyansk with 2 tugs, 2 lighters and "Grafenau" as escort. The Mariupol-Taganrog convoy ran with naval gunnery lighter No. 4, 2 motor minesweepers (RM), "Reni" and 8 transport cutters.

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

27 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance reported no enemy shipping in the Black Sea.

Probing reconnaissance was flown along the Caucasus coast as far as Ochemchiri, but no naval vessels were detected. The following vessels were observed: 1 freighter of 2,000 tons, course east, off the Turkish coast 10 miles north of Inebolu; 1 tanker of 500 tons, 3 coastal vessels, stopped, 12 miles west of Ayanzik; 1 freighter of 4,000 tons, course west, 20 miles southeast of Sinope; at 0745 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, course east, 15 miles north of Trabzon.

Enemy shipping in port:

Ghelenjik at 0713: 6 coastal vessels totaling 2,000 tons, one with steam up, 8 motor minesweepers, 15 M.T.B.s and 70 boats.
Tuapse at 0514 (partial view): 1 freighter of about 1,000 tons and 2 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons.
Sochi at 0521: 10 motor minesweepers of which 2 were in the dockyard, 1 small armed vessel, 20 boats and 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons putting out.
Sukhum at 0530 (partial view): 1 freighter of about 2,000 tons and 20 boats.
Ochemchiri at 0552 (partial view): 1 submarine tender of 2,000 tons, another of 1,000 tons and several coastal vessels.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no large vessels at sea. Submarines detected: 4 in the western Black Sea and the Crimean area, 1 in the Theodosia area and 1 in the southwestern Black Sea.

Normal activity of small vessels. The destroyer of the "Frunse" class, reported yesterday, was located in Batum on the night of 26/27 July.

Further heavy enemy attacks at the Kuban bridgehead. Counter-attacks are in progress against small enemy penetrations.

Own Situation:

0130 11th E-Boat Flotilla broke off the operation off Cape Utrich because of the weather and returned to Anapa. No enemy shipping was sighted in the operational area. 11th E-Boat Flotilla was

ordered to repeat the operation off Cape Utrich on the night of 27/28 July.

0243 From 0243 to 0300, the fourth bombardment of the enemy Mius front was carried out by naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2 and 3 and motor minesweeper RA 56 under the command of the deputy commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla. At first the boats' fire was short of the target, but they finally found the range. Early in the bombardment, a medium-sized fire was observed, while at the end of the action there were large fires which spread very quickly, forming a solid sheet of flames. It may have been started in a store containing inflammable goods. Visibility was greatly improved by the intermittent firing of flares. Shore batteries shelled the formation as it withdrew. Their guns were estimated to be between 7.5 cm. and 10.5 cm. caliber. The enemy fire lay short of the boats and caused no damage or casualties. Ammunition used: 726 rounds and 21 flares. The formation put in to Taganrog at 0400.

0400 The boats which had put out on coastal patrol put in to Temriuk with nothing special to report.

0625 Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Constantza for dockyard overhaul.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

The entire Black Sea area is still under the influence of a depression from Central and Southern Russia. We may therefore expect unsettled weather again today.

Eupatoria - Novorossisk: W winds, force 3, in light thunderstorm squalls temporarily force 5, cloudy, visibility 15 miles. North and south coast of the Sea of Azov: W - NW winds, force 3, otherwise as above.

Chief, Naval Meteorological Station, Simferopol reported that the meteorological buoy, laid 75 miles south of Cape Takil on 19 July, had not been transmitting for 3 days.

It is presumed that, hearing the regular transmissions, the enemy located the buoy and destroyed it.

With a view to future planning, 4th Air Force Command requested details of the anti-aircraft forces, such as anti-aircraft guns, balloon barrage equipment and smoke formations, required in the area of Admiral, Black Sea. I informed them of the following requirements:

A. 1. Sevastopol: Increase in the anti-aircraft forces to 8 heavy anti-aircraft batteries, each comprising 4 guns, or to 6 batteries, each comprising 6 guns.

2. One smoke-laying detachment to screen the harbor area of Sevastopol.

B. Ivan Baba, the most important E-boat base: Increase of the anti-aircraft defenses by 2 heavy anti-aircraft gun batteries, each comprising 4 guns, to ward off the repeated bombing attacks.

C. Protection of Kerch Strait: During the winter months, it will be especially necessary to protect the new winter harbors at Tuszla and Kamish Burun. Barrage balloons and smoke units are requested to protect the port installations in Kerch between the north and south jetties including the north dockyard, the oil tanks and the gasoline harbor.

D. Increase in the air defenses at Anapa harbor by 2 heavy anti-aircraft batteries and a light or medium anti-aircraft platoon is necessary to counter the frequent air raids which endanger our most important supplies.

E. For the defense of the harbor installations in Mariupol and Taganrog and the most important supplies between Mariupol and Taganrog, the minimum requirements are believed to be 1 heavy and 1 light or medium anti-aircraft battery at Mariupol harbor.

1000 Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to carry out the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari on the night of 27/28 July. He put out from Kerch with naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 and motor minesweeper R 30. At 1300 5 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba for the same operation in accordance with their operational orders.

Commander, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla was ordered to carry out the fifth bombardment of the enemy Mius front on the night of 27/28 July. He was not to start the bombardment until dawn when there would be adequate visibility. At the same time, his attention was drawn to the importance of shelling the reported armored train if possible. (The Army was also informed of the train's presence.)

No reports from U-boats at sea. A second Italian midget submarine convoy is planned for 28 July.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 534, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

Very slight enemy air activity during the day and night. Only Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported an air raid in which 8 bombs were dropped. He also reported the usual artillery, anti-tank and mortar bombardment of the site at the east harbor and the southern part of the town. 49 rounds from heavy caliber guns were again fired at Taganrog from Pavlo Ochakov from 2300 (26 July) to 0200. Impacts landed in the harbor and the harbor area, but no damage was caused. One soldier was wounded. Between 0400 and 0515, the same battery fired 50 rounds at a Mariupol-Taganrog convoy which was 6 km. off Taganrog. No hits were scored.

This repeated shelling of Taganrog harbor in the last few days and today's report of the first bombardment of a convoy from Pavlo Ochakov constitute a serious threat to the important Mariupol-Taganrog traffic. I therefore intend to bombard the enemy batteries at Pavlo Ochakov in the near future.

Minesweeping Activity:

Varna: Vessels BW 1, BW 2 and BW 4 swept Varna-North for mines.

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 reported execution of minesweeping between Miles 37 and 33. The area was covered 12 times but no mines were swept.

Kerch: Motor minesweeper RA 54 and 1 motor minesweeper (FR) escorted the Anapa convoy. No mines swept. Two motor minesweepers (FR) and 3 FZ-boats with skid gear provided anti-mine escort on route Red. No mines swept. Minesweeping planes twice swept the area from Red 16 via points 15 and 201 to point Z to a width of 200 meters on each side. No mines swept.

At 1730 motor minesweeper R 166 put out for Nikolaiev via Sevastopol.

Supply Traffic:

a. Traffic in Kerch Strait ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 153 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. At 1815 convoy No. 154 put out from Kerch with

7 naval ferry barges.

c. and d. No Kerch-Temriuk or Genichesk-Temriuk convoys ran as the routes were closed to traffic.

e. Sea of Azov:

Berdyansk-Kerch convoy No. 5 ran with 2 tugs and 2 lighters.

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

28 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

The observation post of Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk sighted 8 vessels off landing area B from 2200 to 0100 (28/29 July). Because of rain, no further shipping movements were detected off the coast.

Daylight air reconnaissance was unable to examine the Caucasus coast owing to the weather. At 1134 1 submarine was sighted on a westerly course 25 miles north of Amasra. Heavy shipping traffic off the Turkish coast as on the previous day: at 1150 1 freighter of 3,000 tons, course east, 14 miles northeast of Cide; at 1210 1 freighter of 1,800 tons, course west, 14 miles northwest of Ayanzik; at 1211 1 freighter of 1,200 tons and 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, apparently stopped, off Ayanzik; at 1230 1 freighter of 5,000 tons, course west, 10 miles west of Bafra Burnu; at 1242 1 freighter of 200 tons, course east, 15 miles north of Samsun. No further enemy shipping traffic was sighted in the rest of the Black Sea area examined.

No vessels were sighted in the reconnaissance area in the Sea of Azov.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported that no fleet activity of large enemy vessels could be detected from radio traffic. Submarines detected: 1 in the Bosporus area, 1 off the central part of the Turkish coast (probably returning), 1 in the southeastern Black Sea putting in to port, 2 off the southern Crimean coast and 3 in the southeastern Black Sea. Patrol vessel activity was slight. From the Kuban bridgehead, a successful German attack was reported in which the enemy penetration on Myshako mountain was mopped up. After fairly even fighting, strong enemy attacks on the eastern front of the bridgehead were repulsed.

Own Situation:

The fifth bombardment of the enemy Mius front was carried out from 0316 to 0332. The formation, comprising motor minesweeper RA 56 and naval gunnery lighters Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, was under the command of Lieutenant Richter (the usual flotilla commander was ill). The vessels put out from Taganrog as early as 2145 on 27 July, because an enemy bombardment was expected. Immediately after the boats left, the harbor was heavily

shelled. The boats reached the bombardment position at 0315. They were about 2 miles off the coast. At 0316 they opened fire against the enemy batteries which were clearly visible in the gun flashes. Shortly after, a mobile armored train was detected on land and immediately attacked. The train stopped after a direct hit and started to fire accurately with 4 to 6 guns in quick succession. The shore batteries also opened fire on the formation. 60 to 70 impacts were seen close to RA 56. The formation then withdrew in quarterline formation as they were seriously threatened by the enemy fire in the increasing light. A direct hit was scored on the engine of the armored train as the formation turned off. All naval gunnery lighters ceased fire at 0332 and they were still being heavily shelled by the armored train and enemy batteries as they withdrew. RA 56 screened the formation with smoke as the wind was favorable. The enemy fire then decreased and finally stopped. No damage or casualties. Ammunition used: 425 rounds of 8.8 cm. shells. The formation put in to Taganrog at 0445.

Since the armored train had started to move to the east and was then again damaged, I am of the opinion that this was a notable success which should bring a certain relief to the Army in this area.

0000 Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla reported that the shelling of Primorsko Akhtari had had to be abandoned because of the weather (SSW winds, force 5, sea 3 - 4, cross swell). The formation was in a position about 23 miles northnorthwest of Achuevski. Five boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla were dismissed from the formation at 0500 and they put in to Kerch at 0850. Motor minesweeper R 30 and 4 naval gunnery lighters put in to Kerch at 1530. Some of the naval gunnery lighters had been flooded in the rough weather and their endurance was reduced by the effect of the cross swell. The ammunition for the forward guns was seriously damaged as water had been shipped for 30 hours and rust had started to form on the shells.

I knew when I issued the sailing orders that the weather was extremely doubtful. Nevertheless, the risk had to be taken as motor gunboats had recently increased in Primorsko Akhtari. I am of the opinion that these boats are a serious threat to our convoy supplies in the Sea of Azov and every effort must be made to destroy them.

The operation would have been possible if there had not been a thunderstorm with heavy squalls in

the course of the night. This is another example of the poor resistance of the naval gunnery lighters to bad weather.

0400 The boats which had put out on coastal patrol put in to Temriuk. They had nothing to report.

Weather forecast (Simferopol 0930):

The weather is still conditioned by the fixed depression over Central Russia.

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov: SW - W winds, force 3, sea wind in the afternoon, thundery squalls, wind temporarily increasing to force 5, cloudy, visibility 20 miles.

I did not agree with the proposal of Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to lay buoys on both sides of route Red from point X to point 220. He proposed that the seamarks should be placed alternately on each side with a mile between each. I do not think that the laying of buoys in this fashion is advisable as it would enable the enemy to mine the route easily, while we have not sufficient minesweeping forces at our disposal to sweep the route continuously. I do however think it would be a good idea to lay one line of small buoys with a mile between each buoy. The buoys should also be examined for size and visibility and very large buoys, easily visible from the air, should not be used. I directed Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus to decrease the distance between the present buoys and to remove any buoys which were too large.

No reports from U-boats at sea.

1030 Three boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put in to Eupatoria from Anapa.

1336 Motor minesweeper MR 7, which was providing anti-mine escort for a towed convoy from Odessa to Sevastopol, reported that a mine exploded in her gear 2.8 miles south of Eupatoria. Shortly after, lighter EL 113 struck a mine close by and was seriously damaged. She had to be beached near Eupatoria by a naval ferry barge. No casualties. The convoy continued passage to Sevastopol. A later convoy, comprising steamers "Boy Feddersen" and "Tisza", 2 Rumanian destroyers and 4 motor minesweepers, was warned while proceeding from Constantza to Sevastopol. The commander of the convoy then directed the motor minesweepers to proceed with gear ahead of the convoy in this area.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 534, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

No air raids on convoys or ports during the day. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the usual artillery and mortar bombardment of the town and the site at the east harbor. He also reported that coastal batteries had attacked enemy landing craft off landing area B.

Taganrog reported that the harbor area was shelled by the battery on Pavlo Ochakov on the evening of 27 July and in the early morning hours. The armored train, somewhere near Morskaya, also shelled the town (before the action of the naval gunnery lighters). Slight damage was caused to buildings and lighter No. 2019 was superficially damaged by splinters. No casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Mine-exploding vessel No. 193 swept the area between Miles 37 and 33 twenty times. No mines were detected.

Ak Mechet: A mine, washed ashore near Burun Eli, was detonated by children who threw stones at it. One child was killed and 1 wounded. The mine had not been sighted before.

Kerch: 2 motor minesweepers (RA) provided anti-mine escort for the Kerch-Anapa convoy. No mines swept. Two motor minesweepers (FR) and 3 FZ-boats with skid gear swept route Red. Minesweeping planes swept route Red twice from point 16 to point Z to a breadth of 200 meters on each side. No mines swept. One harbor defense boat swept route 300 for moored mines with oropesa gear. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

In the plans for 29 July, a drop of 750 tons will have to be accepted as vessels are detained in Temriuk and Genichesk because of the closing of the route to traffic. Unloading of "Woywoda" and "Orion" in Taman was stopped because of a shortage of goods trucks.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 154 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. One naval ferry barge dropped out with engine trouble. At 1805 convoy No. 155 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. No Kerch-Temriuk convoys ran because the route was closed.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk:

At 1820 convoy No. 48 put out from Genichesk with 4 naval ferry barges. The barges will proceed from point Red 16 to Temriuk with anti-mine escort.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 2020 the Taganrog-Mariupol convoy put out from Taganrog with 2 tugs, 2 lighters, 1 coastal sailing vessel and 7 transport cutters.

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled with the exception of the Odessa-Sevastopol towed convoy which struck a mine.

29 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance examined the Caucasus coast as far as Batum and the ports as far as Ochemchiri. The following vessels were sighted: at 0716 2 M.T.B.s, course southeast, off Tuapse; at 0715 2 coastal vessels totaling 300 tons, course northwest, 15 miles southeast of Tuapse; at 0634 2 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons, course northwest, and 1 motor minesweeper and 1 patrol vessel, course northwest, off Sukhum.

Enemy shipping in port:

Tuapse at 0720: 10 coastal vessels totaling 2,300 tons, 3 motor minesweepers, 18 M.T.B.s, one of which was beached, 1 floating crane and 30 boats.
Sukhum at 0637: 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, 1 torpedoboat, 1 minesweeper, 3 motor minesweepers and 25 other boats, of which 15 were beached.
Ochemchiri at 0624: 2 submarine tenders of 2,000 and 1,000 tons respectively, 1 coastal vessel of 300 tons, 5 submarines, 4 motor minesweepers, one of which was beached and 12 boats.
Poti at 0558 (oblique view): 2 large ships with steam up. The other ports were not examined because of the weather and fighter defenses.

No reports from the Sea of Azov.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria reported no large enemy vessels at sea. Seven submarines were intercepted: 1 in the evening about 40 miles north of the Bosporus, 2 in the Crimean coast area, 1 still homeward bound, 2 in the southeastern Black Sea and 1 at sea in an unidentified position. The submarine reported about to put in yesterday has arrived in her base.

Slight activity of small vessels. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported the usual shipping movements off landing area B.

Own Situation:

After putting in to Sevastopol, the commander of naval ferry barge F 493 reported that he had been attacked by a submarine 15 miles southeast of Cape Tarkhankutzki at 1443 on 28 July.

A torpedo track was sighted, no damage was caused. Four depth charges were dropped without result. The commander of F 493 was informed by Commander, Convoys and Escorts, Crimean Coast that such information should in future be reported immediately by radiogram.

0430 The boats on coastal patrol put in to Temriuk with nothing to report.

0500 I went to Mariupol and Taganrog to inspect the operational naval gunnery lighter group there and to hold a conference with the Army commands regarding further offensive naval operations in the northern Sea of Azov.

0750 Motor sailing vessel "Immanuel" probably struck a mine. She sank within 3 minutes after a loud explosion in the bows. One sailor of the mercantile marine was killed. At present, investigations are being made by divers to see if the sinking was caused by a mine.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

The weather will continue to be unsettled today as a result of the fixed depression over Central and Southern Russia.

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
E winds, force 3, sea wind increasing to force 5 in the afternoon, cloudy, visibility 20 miles.

On request, U 20 reported that she would commence return passage on 4 August.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria located U 24 50 miles north of Tirebolu.

Commanding Admiral, Naval Group South instigated an investigation as to the possible employment of steamer "Romania". It was learned that, with slight alteration (moving of the mooring-posts on the stern), she could be used as an auxiliary minelayer. About 180 mines could be carried on deck and about 4 0 more in the forward hold. Preparations for conversion are to be started at once and at the same time negotiations should be carried out with her shipping company.

Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to repeat the attack against the Novorossisk beach-head. The attack should be made on landing area B at 2300, with alternative target landing area C. Shortly before launching the attack, flares should be requested over landing area B by special radio signal. Torpedoes should only be used against clearly identified vessels.

Landing places should be shelled. When the attack has been made, boats should withdraw from the coast, returning on direct course to Ivan Baba. 5th Army Corps was informed that, owing to navigational difficulties, the boats might arrive for the operation a few minutes before or after 2300.

Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out at 1730 to carry out the operation ordered off Kamish Burun. At 2116 3 enemy M.T.B.s were sighted 10 miles southwest of Golova hill, but they did not notice our flotilla. Because of time restrictions, they could not be attacked as they passed swiftly in a southwesterly swell, force 3. The flotilla stopped at 2230 in a position 2.5 miles off landing area B and transmitted the special radio signal requesting illumination by flares to obtain a better view of the coast and to enable the boats to approach at the right time. At 2245 the flares showed 1 patrol vessel (a large submarine chaser) south of Suchuk and 4 or 5 smaller vessels between Suchuk and landing area B at some distance from the coast.

No traffic was observed in the landing area. In spite of the express instructions issued to 5th Army Corps, the flares were too far out to sea. They showed up our own boats and enabled the patrol vessel to shell them with 4.5 cm. guns. Numerous searchlights picked the boats out at once from the coast and the batteries bombarded them with guns as heavy as 13.2 cm. caliber. There was a surprisingly heavy concentration of light batteries on Myshako mountain. The flotilla then withdrew, all boats using only one engine as the searchlights were obviously directed by a listening device. A second unobserved approach was frustrated by a new searchlight at the foot of Myshako mountain. It held the boats for a long time in its beam and directed the heavy batteries from the Kabardinka and Penay areas on to the targets. The early withdrawal meant that the program could no longer be observed, so formation made off at slow speed with the intention of proceeding close to the coast to intercept any returning enemy M.T.B.s. The boats then returned to Ivan Baba. The enemy M.T.B.s sighted on outward passage were detected from noise bearings by Naval Port Commander, Anapa at 2250, passing at a distance of about 4 miles from the coast on course 300°.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 467, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

Enemy Air Activity:

At 0750 enemy planes were observed 10 miles south of Cape Tarkhankutzki. Novorossisk reported the usual shelling and also machine-gunning of the center of the town by enemy planes. Taganrog was shelled from 2340 (28 July) to 0030 by the enemy battery at Pavlo Ochakov. Two large, nearly empty wooden sheds at the harbor were hit and destroyed. No further losses or damage.

Minesweeping Activity:

Danube: Motor minesweepers FR 1, FR 9 and FR 11 swept the area between Galatz and Tulcea with gear. No mines swept.

Sevastopol: 5 shallow inertia contact mines were swept by motor minesweeper MR 7, D 10 and D 15 about 4 miles southsouthwest of Eupatoria.

Kerch: Route Red was reopened to traffic with anti-mine escort from point 15 to Temriuk. Anti-mine escorts with skid gear and towed loop gear swept no mines between point 15 and Temriuk. Minesweeping planes swept route Red four times from point 15 to point Z without result. Motor minesweepers RA 52 and FR 2 escorted the Anapa convoy. No mines swept.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Vessels held in Temriuk because of the closing of the route caused a drop of 380 tons. A further drop in tonnage was caused in Taman and Senaya by the shortage of goods trucks and the decrease in transportation by motor vehicles due to the slippery roads.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 155 ran with 7 naval ferry barges. (One naval ferry barge returned with engine trouble.) Convoy No. 156 put out from Kerch at 1810.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 54 put in to Kerch at 1530 with 1 tug and 2 naval ferry barges. At 1830 convoy No. 55 put out from Kerch with 1 tug, 1 freight towing vessel, 1 lighter and 2 naval ferry barges.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk:

At 1605 convoy No. 47 put out from Kerch for Genichesk. Convoy No. 48 put in to Temriuk at 1530 with 4 naval ferry barges.

e. Sea of Azov:

At 0850 the Taganrog-Mariupol convoy put in to Mariupol with 4 naval gunnery lighters, 2 tugs, 2 lighters and 7 transport cutters. (For the loss of motor sailing vessel "Immanuel", see above.)

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

30 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Daylight air reconnaissance detected no enemy shipping in the western or central Black Sea and no reports on the enemy were received from the Sea of Azov. The ports were only partially observed because of the weather. Yeisk at 0630: 5 motor gunboats, 3 coastal vessels and about 20 boats, some beached.

According to radio traffic, there were no large surface vessels at sea. Submarines detected: 1 in the northwestern Black Sea and 2 in the southeastern Black Sea (1 putting in and 1 putting out). Slight activity of small vessels.

No large-scale actions were reported from the Kuban bridgehead.

Own Situation:

0400 Four boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put in to Ivan Baba from the action against the beachhead near Novorossisk (see War Diary 29 July).

0400 The boats on coastal patrol put in to Temriuk with nothing to report.

0513 "Ship 19", which was on anti-submarine operations in the area off Cape Tarkhankutzki, reported that she had attacked an enemy submarine 23 miles southwest of the cape. Submarine chaser "Xanten" was at once ordered to assist "Ship 19" and she put out from Ak Mechet at 0642. At 0730 "Ship 19" reported that she had used up all her depth charges and that "Xanten" was continuing the attack. "Ship 19" took in new depth charges from 2 naval ferry barges from Sevastopol and again pursued the submarine until dusk. The submarine chasers had no visible success.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
W winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind in the afternoon, cloudy, local thundery squalls in the afternoon, visibility 6 to 10 miles.

1st E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to operate against enemy shipping traffic along the Caucasus coast off Lasarevskaya. The boats will arrive in the operational area at 2130 on 31 July and

commence return passage to Ivan Baba at 2330. One of our own U-boats was ordered to stay south of 43° 45' N to avoid any possible encounter with the E-boat formation.

Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla was ordered to operate against Primorsko Akhtari on the night of 31 July/1 August with motor minesweeper R 30, the 2nd group of 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla (4 naval gunnery lighters) and 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla. They were to engage, attack and destroy the enemy gunboats which, according to experience, usually left the port whenever the shelling started.

11th E-Boat Flotilla was ordered to dispatch 3 boats to the area south of Cape Meganom for anti-submarine operations. They were to put out from Theodosia at 1930 and commence return passage half an hour before dawn. Their operational area lies 10 miles south of our convoy route.

A few changes were necessary in the coastal batteries manned by the Navy in the Anapa-Novorossisk area. In agreement with 17th Army H.Q., I asked Naval Group Command, South (in radiogram ASM Gkdos. 4589/43 A II of 26 July) to agree to my proposal to disband a captured battery, as it was impossible to replace the ammunition, and to transfer two more batteries to the Army as the captured guns were absolutely unfit for attacks on targets at sea. The remaining batteries with the proposed new 15 cm. battery under construction in the narrow Anapa area will form a well-organized artillery force. In this communication, I again requested Group's approval of the new naval gunnery detachment, although in reality it was already in existence.

1930 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 467, 8 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duty.

1930 Commander, 11th E-Boat Flotilla reported that 2 of the 3 boats at readiness in Theodosia were unfit for operations. This was learned in the afternoon during trials. The anti-submarine operations could therefore not be carried out.

2056 At 2056 the radar station at Cape Meganom reported locating a target about 2 miles south of the cape, probably an enemy submarine. A further location showed that the boat was proceeding on a westerly course. On receipt of this report, 3 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out on anti-submarine operations but returned to Ivan Baba at 2345 after an unsuccessful search.

U-boat Situation:

U 24 (Lieutenant Petersen) reported by radiogram at 2040: "Fired 2 torpedoes at a damaged tanker in Sukhum. Depth charges. Tanker was 7,000 G.R.T., loaded or flooded, sea force 1, depth setting 5.5 meters with magnetic firing; 2 hits were scored and the target broke apart. Three torpedoes left, 18 cbm. fuel, position air grid square 0326."

This successful operation was the third attempt to sink this tanker. (The first attack was made at the end of June by U 18, the second in the middle of July by U 23.) She sank in water some 8 - 9 meters deep. Although able to float, the tanker had apparently not been able to proceed. She was anchored west of Sukhum, 300 meters off the coast and had been used as a floating fuel store.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

No enemy air raids during the day against convoys or ports. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported shelling of the site at the east harbor and the southern sector.

Minesweeping Activity:

Varna: Motor minesweepers R 37 and R 209 put out for Constantza with gear. No mines swept. One drift mine was sunk by gunfire by submarine chaser No. 2306 4.5 miles east of Kaliakra.

Sevastopol: 5 more shallow inertia contact mines were swept by motor minesweeper MR 7, D 10, D 11, D 15 and FZ 5 about 4 to 5 miles southsouthwest of Eupatoria.

Kerch: 10 moored mines were cut by motor minesweeper R 30 on route Red 2 miles west of point Z. Another moored mine was swept by 2 motor minesweepers (FR) near point 201. Motor minesweepers RA 52 and FR 2 provided anti-mine escort for an Anapa convoy, but swept no mines. The group with towed loop gear searched for ground mines from Red 14 to Temriuk without result. Minesweeping planes swept route Red four times from point 16 to point Z to a width of 200 meters on both sides of the line of buoys. No mines swept.

Mariupol: The coastal route from Mariupol to Krivaya Kossa was closed to traffic south of 47° 2' N, but north of this latitude traffic was permitted. Seven moored mines were swept south of the coastal route.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

A drop in tonnage of 600 tons was caused by delay in unloading combined operations ferries. Otherwise ferry traffic ran as scheduled.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 156 ran with 6 naval ferry barges. (One naval ferry barge was diverted to Taman because of engine trouble.) At 1800 convoy No. 157 put out from Kerch with 6 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 53 ran with 1 tug, 2 lighters and 3 naval ferry barges. At 1400 convoy No. 55 put in to Temriuk with 1 tug, 1 lighter, 1 freight towing vessel and 2 naval ferry barges.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 47 ran with 5 naval ferry barges.

e. Sea of Azov:

The Kerch-Berdyansk convoy put out from Kerch at 1220 with 1 tug, 1 lighter and "Grafenau" as escort.

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

CONFIDENTIAL

31 July, 1943

Simferopol

Enemy Situation:

Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk observed 14 vessels off landing area B between 2130 and 2330. The landing area was shelled by our coastal guns.

Daylight air reconnaissance in the central and western Black Sea and off the Caucasus coast reported no enemy shipping. The following vessels were sighted off the Turkish coast: at 0525 1 freighter of 1,000 tons and 6 coastal vessels totaling 1,000 tons, stopped, 10 miles west of Ayanzik; at 0524 1 passenger ship of 2,500 tons, course west, 10 miles north of Ayanzik; at 0529 3 coastal vessels totaling 800 tons, stopped, 15 miles northeast of Ayanzik; At 0600 1 freighter of 1,500 tons, stopped, off Samsun.

Reconnaissance in the Sea of Azov observed 5 gunboats, course north, 15 miles southwest of Achuevski at 0530 and 1 gunboat putting out from Primorsko Akhtari, course northwest, at 0535.

Main Naval D/F Station, Eupatoria detected remarkably slight radio traffic. No cruisers, destroyers or submarines were heard transmitting. One submarine was heard tuned for reception, probably in the northwestern Black Sea. Slight activity of small vessels.

A successful German shock troop operation at Nebershayevskaya was reported from the Kuban bridgehead. An attack was repulsed near Podgorny and the enemy suffered heavy casualties.

Own Situation:

0037 Naval ferry barge F 418 reported suspicious engine noises in the patrol line. Our own patrol boats were in action against 5 enemy motor gunboats from 0320 to 0525. Seven naval ferry barges, which were anchored in Temriuk roads, put out to assist the patrol boats. The Air Force sent 5 fighters and 3 dive-bombers. No successes were observed as the enemy laid a smoke screen. Our own boats suffered no damage or casualties.

The action was fought at a range of 5,500 - 9,000 meters. Our own fire was accurate.

The enemy over-fired our range, apparently using 7.5 cm. steel shells, as no splinter effects were observed, and one 4.5 cm. gun. All boats put in to Temriuk at 0630. Perhaps the enemy boats had intended to lay mines.

Weather forecast
(Simferopol 0930):

Weather conditions are still influenced by the depression over Central Russia.

Eupatoria - Novorossisk and Sea of Azov:
W winds, force 2 - 3, sea wind up to force 4 throughout the day, cloudy, visibility 6 to 10 miles.

I intend to carry out several minelaying operations in the near future. The advisability of such operations off the Caucasus coast is still being investigated. Mines are soon to be laid in the Sea of Azov off Yeisk. For this purpose, 1 naval gunnery lighter will be equipped in Mariupol with a temporary minelaying device. MLB mines will be used to mine the harbor entrance. Primorsko Akhtari will be mined by motor minesweepers in one of the next few dark nights. The type of mine to be used is still under consideration.

U-boat Situation:

Because of the operation of 1st E-Boat Flotilla on the night of 31 July/1 August, U 19 which was in the area off Tuapse was ordered not to pass north of 43° 45' N from 1800 until dawn.

Owing to the weather, aerial photographs could still not be taken to confirm yesterday's report of the destruction of a tanker off Sukhum. The attention of U-boats at sea was drawn to the favorable new moon nights, which would be especially suitable for surface penetrations (using electric motors) to the roads and harbors.

Two Italian midget submarines are on passage to Sevastopol.

1200 Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla put out from Kerch with motor minesweeper R 30, naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11 to carry out the operation ordered off Primorsko Akhtari. Three boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba at 1700 for the same operation.

1330 Two boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla put out from Ivan Baba to operate off the Caucasus coast near Lasarevskaya. A third E-boat had put out from Kamish Burun at 1200. All three met at sea at

1450 according to plan. On passage to the operational area, the boats were machine-gunned and bombed by 2 flying boats at 1825. Each flying boat dropped 2 medium bombs. No damage or casualties. As the flying boats did not shadow the formation, the operation was continued according to plan. The coast near Lasarevskaya was clearly visible from 2130 to 2345. No traffic was observed, but the searchlights were very active, probably because of the reconnaissance reports from the 2 flying boats.

One of our own reconnaissance planes, detailed for this operation, had to drop out because of a radio breakdown. The boats commenced return passage to Ivan Baba at 2345.

1925 Four boats of 11th E-Boat Flotilla put out from Theodosia for the anti-submarine operations ordered in the area south of Theodosia. One E-boat returned to Theodosia at 2110 because of engine trouble.

1945 Naval ferry barges F 418 and F 467, 9 boats and 4 assault boats put out from Temriuk on coastal defense duties. Another boat put out to watch for minelaying off the harbor entrance.

Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus proposed that all the naval ferry barges and other armed operational boats in Temriuk should be transferred in the evening to the roads, where they could anchor to ensure transmission of orders for the naval signal station. This measure was suggested because our relatively weak patrol forces had had frequent contact with the enemy recently. The radio on one of the boats should be manned continuously. The task of these forces in the roads, which were always to be at immediate readiness, was to act as operational reserves or additional attack forces when our patrol forces made contact with enemy forces. They were also to protect the harbor entrance against mines or other enemy attempts at blockade.

I thoroughly approved of this proposal as it would entail no drop in tonnage and, in any case, Temriuk was not intended as a rest port for operational naval ferry barges, etc. Finally, the measure should reduce the danger of air attacks on the harbor.

Enemy Air and Shore Battery Activity:

No air raids on convoys during the day. Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk reported an air raid at 0500 in which 30 bombs were dropped on the eastern and southern parts of the town. Shelling was reported from Novorossisk, Mariupol and

Taganrog. At 0019 a battery near Mariupol was shelled by enemy vessels at sea. Twelve rounds were fired, caliber not identified.

At 0048 the second battery was bombarded from the sea. Twelve rounds were fired. The second battery replied at 0050 with 4 rounds in the direction of the gun flashes. Results were not observed. The enemy vessels laid a smoke screen in the beam of the searchlights and withdrew. No damage or casualties.

Minesweeping Activity:

Sevastopol: 3 more mines were swept off Eupatoria by motor minesweeper MR 7, D 6, D 8, D 10 and D 15. This raised the number of mines swept in this area during the last few days to 16. Minesweeping activity was continued.

Kerch: 2 motor minesweepers (FR) protected a convoy against moored mines on route Red. No mines swept. Two motor minesweepers (RA) escorted an Anapa convoy. No mines swept. Minesweeping planes swept route Red four times from point 16 to point Z to a breadth of 400 meters. No mines swept. Three FZ-boats and 1 harbor defense boat swept Kerch Strait for moored mines without result.

On 10 July, tugs were requested from the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping for minesweeping activity in the Danube Delta. The Reich Commissioner asked on 12 July how many tugs were required and on 14 July Admiral, Black Sea requested 2 tugs of at least 200 h.p.

On 21 July, in the presence of Commander, Sea Transportation, it was established that nothing had been done either by the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping or by the Danube Steamship Company to make these tugs available. Commander, Sea Transportation therefore contacted Transportation Command, which at once requested 2 tugs from Transportation Command, Armed Forces, Southeast. This office replied that tugs "Dreisen" and "Zenum" would be ready in Braila on 27 July to be taken over by the Navy. The tugs were taken over and are now in Constantza for degaussing.

Supply Traffic:

a. Kerch Strait:

Loading at Kerch had to be temporarily stopped because of heavy rain. A shortage of goods trucks at Taman caused a drop in performance.

b. Anapa convoys:

Convoy No. 157 ran with 5 naval ferry barges. At 1800 convoy No. 158 put out from Kerch with 7 naval ferry barges.

c. Kerch-Temriuk:

Convoy No. 55 ran with 1 tug, 1 lighter and 4 naval ferry barges. At 1825 convoy No. 56 put out from Kerch with 1 motor sailing vessel and 3 naval ferry barges.

d. Genichesk-Temriuk convoy No. 48 put out from Temriuk at 0730 with 1 towing vessel, 1 lighter and 4 naval ferry barges.

e. Sea of Azov:

Kerch-Berdyansk convoy No. 6 ran with 1 tug, 1 lighter, 2 transport cutters and "Grafenau" as escort.

f. Crimea convoys and convoys in the western Black Sea ran as scheduled.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

CONFIDENTIAL

Survey for July 1943

A. Enemy merchant ships sunk:

1. By U-boats: 1 freighter of 2,000 tons and 1 tanker of 7,000 tons.

2. By E-boats: 5 lighters totaling 2,500 tons.

Total: 11,500 tons.

B. Enemy naval forces sunk:

By motor minesweepers and naval gunnery lighters: 6 vessels, including 2 motor gunboats and 1 patrol vessel.

C. Enemy planes brought down by naval forces:

Six planes were reported shot down, all by naval ferry barges. Confirmation pending. In addition, 28 enemy planes were brought down by the fighters which escorted our convoys.

D. Enemy air raids:

1. On warships and convoys: 22

2. On ports in the Crimea: 14

3. On ports and loading centers at the Kuban bridgehead and on the Sea of Azov: 13.

E. Enemy submarine attacks: 6.

F. Convoys escorted: The following vessels were escorted by naval vessels in the month of July: 12 warships, 1 Air Force dock, 58 steamers totaling 107,709 tons and 127 lighters.

G. Supply traffic to the Kuban bridgehead and the Mius front:

a. Kerch-Anapa convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges): 14,319 tons

b. Kerch-Temriuk convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters): 11,767 tons

c. Genichesk-Temriuk convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters): 11,184 tons

d. Theodosia-Taman convoys (by the Navy only with naval ferry barges and lighters): 10,081 tons

e. Ferry traffic in Kerch Strait (Navy's share 25,127 tons): 73,508 tons

Total convoy supplies to the bridgehead: 120,859 tons

Tonnage carried by the Navy: 72,478 tons

The scheduled monthly figure of an average of 4,535 tons daily was therefore not achieved. It fell short by 19,726 tons (for reasons see War Diary 31 July).

f. Yalta-Kerch timber transports (naval ferry barges): 1,785 tons

g. Mariupol-Taganrog convoys: Total not yet known.

h. In Kerch Strait the following supplies were also transported to the east:

	By the Army and Air Force:	By the Navy:
Motor vehicles	4,342	8
Horse-drawn vehicles	1,325	51
Guns	70	-
Tanks	31	-
Personnel (soldiers)	66,173	238
Horses	4,455	-
Head of cattle	410	3,503

The appendix to the War Diary contains a copy of a letter from the former Commanding General, 17th Army to Commanding Admiral, Black Sea on the occasion of his transfer.

In the month of July, the daily figure of 4,070 tons requested by Army Group A was generally not achieved for the following reasons:

1. According to a report from the sea transportation offices, the labor allocated to the loading and unloading ports was inadequate for a quick turnover of the tonnage available.

2. Particularly in Kerch, the loading of the planned amount was at times impossible because of delays in delivery of the goods. These delays were traced back to the derailment of trains and the blasting of bridges.

The sea transportation offices at Kerch, Taman and Senaya reported several times during the month that loading and unloading had been seriously impeded by a shortage of

labor and delays in delivery of cargo. Quartermaster General, Army Group A and 17th Army H.Q. were informed of these reports by telephone and radiogram and it was pointed out that an increase in the turnover figures could only be obtained by quicker loading and unloading. Quartermaster General, Army Group A has several times promised better conditions. A continuous increase in the tonnage carried in the month of July is however visible. In a letter dated 17 July, Army Group A requested an increase of transportation to approximately 5,000 tons per day for the Army, Air Force and Organization Todt. In spite of the fact that 4 lighters capable of carrying a total of 3,500 tons have now been allocated, this is not possible. It still takes too long for the vessels to turn round and 3 lighters capable of carrying a total of 2,500 tons were put out of action in the past month. After the transfer of the 57 lighters capable of carrying 17,000 tons and the allocation of 3 more tugs promised by the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping, the desired transportation figures should be reached, if no major losses are suffered.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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APPENDIX I

Reference: War Diary 19 July 1943

1st E-Boat Flotilla received the following order in (I) ASM Gkdos. 4428 AI for the operation planned against the Myshako beachhead from 20 to 23 July. The operation should be carried out in cooperation with the Army and Air Force in accordance with the appended note ASM Gkdos. 4341 in Appendix II, on the conference between Chief of Staff, Admiral, Black Sea with 17th Army H.Q. and 5th Army Corps.

I. To:
1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ivan Baba
Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Kerch
Naval Port Commander, Anapa
Naval Port Commander, Novorossisk.

Copy to:
1st Air Corps (Naval Liaison Officer)
Naval Group South
Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q.

MOST SECRET

1. Situation:
According to previous experience, enemy supply traffic to the beachhead south of Novorossisk runs between 2200 and midnight. 17th Army H.Q. plans to harass this traffic continuously with the support of the Navy.

2. Orders:

Six boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla, including all operational boats with 4 cm. guns, will attack landing points 2, 3 and 4 suddenly and decisively. The boats will operate in pairs using guns and torpedoes.

3. The operation will be carried out on receipt of codeword "Feuerzauber" which will give date and time. The time will indicate the hour for the attack on the beachhead. This time should be meticulously observed as far as possible by all 3 groups, so that our Air Force and Army guns will not trap our boats when they start the bombardment. 23 July is scheduled as the day of the action with 24 July as the alternative.

4. The boats will approach on a route south of the enemy declared area in Kerch Strait to pass the Anapa area 2½ hours before zero hour. They should then withdraw from the coast and proceed to the beachhead at crawling speed to make the surprise

attack at 2250 on 23 July. The moon is due to rise over the beachhead at 2250. The boats should withdraw at maximum speed immediately after the bombardment. The Air Force and the Army guns will start their bombardment half an hour later.

5. Whenever the boats withdraw, 1st E-Boat Flotilla will report execution of the bombardment by short signal and will ensure that the signal is repeated by control.

6. Boats should pass Anapa at 0200 at the latest.

7. Additional note for Naval Port Commander, Anapa:

To avoid compromising the operation, coastal stations should not request recognition signals from the outward bound boats.

8. The Army and Air Force stations concerned will receive this order with a special note.

II. Note:

Subject: Joint action of the Army, Air Force and Navy against supply traffic to the Myshako beachhead.

A possible joint action by the Navy, Air Force and Army against supply traffic to the Myshako beachhead was considered at a conference on 13 July with 17th Army H.Q. and 5th Army Corps. Its aim was a more forceful disruption of enemy supply traffic than has hitherto been achieved and coordination of the three Services for a possible joint operation.

In this action, the Army believes that if sufficient flares are dropped over the landing points by the Air Force and the area is suddenly bombarded by the Army guns and bombed by the Air Force, the Navy should then be able to intercept any homeward or outward bound enemy vessels at sea.

The following joint operation seems possible if all precautions are taken to prevent our forces being taken for enemy naval forces:

1. Three groups of E-boats or minesweepers should be disposed suddenly and decisively against 3 landing points in such a way that enemy supply traffic is sure to be caught. This is the plan for 2200 to 2300.

2. With the present phase of the moon, the attack must be carried out in the darkness of the first half of the night. The operation must therefore take place between 20 July and 22 July because

thereafter the moon will be visible before 2300.

3. The attack by the Air Force and the Army coastal guns must be separate from the action of the boats so that our boats are not taken for enemy naval forces by our own Air Force or Army coastal batteries while they are attacking or withdrawing. In other words, the attack should be launched about 15 minutes after the action of the E-boats.

4. Execution: The boats participating in the operation should pass Anapa at about 2200; they should haul out from the coast to approach landing points 2, 3 and 4 in pairs at noiseless speed by 2230. The bombardment of the landing points and vessels should be started suddenly at 2230, using guns and torpedoes, and immediately afterwards the boats should withdraw from the coast at maximum speed. A star signal should be fired to indicate that the Army coastal batteries and the Air Force can start their bombardment. The signal should be 2 double red stars, 2 white stars and 2 green or white single stars.

5. The operation will be carried out according to the weather on instructions from Admiral, Black Sea to 1st Air Corps, 17th Army H.Q. and 5th Army Corps by means of codeword "Feuerzauber" giving date and time.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

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APPENDIX II

Reference: War Diary 24 July 1943

To:
Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, Kerch
Commander, 1st E-Boat Flotilla, Ivan Baba
Group Commander, 2nd Group, 3rd Gun Carrier Flotilla, Temriuk
Naval Shore Commander, Caucasus, Kerch
Naval Liaison Officer to 17th Army H.Q.
1st Air Corps, Simferopol via Naval Liaison Officer
Commander, Naval Air, Black Sea, Simferopol.

Copy to:
Chief, Operations Branch, Army Group A, Simferopol.

Subject: Repetition of the bombardment of Primorsko Akhtari.

The operation will be carried out on receipt of dated codeword "Pillau 2", in which the date will indicate the day of sailing from the bases. 25 July 1943 is intended as the day of the operation.

I. a. Participating vessels: Naval gunnery lighters Nos. 8, 9, 10 and 11, motor minesweeper R 30 and 6 boats of 1st E-Boat Flotilla (including all operational boats with 4 cm. guns).

b. Command: Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla on board R 30.

c. Task:

1. A sudden attack by naval gunnery lighters on Primorsko Akhtari (town and radio station) and the surrounding batteries and searchlight positions.

2. Destruction of enemy vessels in the harbor and at sea.

d. Sailing:

1. The naval gunnery lighters and motor minesweeper R 30 will put out from Kerch on X-day to pass point A (Red 15) at 1330. They will then proceed at a speed of 6.5 knots to point B (46° N, 37° 16' E) which should be reached at 2000.

2. 1st E-Boat Flotilla will transfer to Kerch to sail from there via point A to point B (46° N, 37° 16' E) which they also should reach at 2000.

3. From point B, they will proceed to point C (blue buoy = 46° 9.2' N, 38° 5.9' E). This position must be reached at 0145: R 30 and the naval gunnery lighters should be in line ahead, with 1st E-Boat Flotilla in lurking positions to the west in close disposition.

II. Execution of the bombardment:

a. Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla will order the naval gunnery lighters to positions for the bombardment. 1st E-Boat Flotilla will remain further to the west in lurking positions.

b. Sudden bombardment by the naval gunnery lighters in accordance with para. I.c.1. at about 0200.

Each naval gunnery lighter will fire only one gun and the rate of salvoes should not be below 15 seconds. Not more than 100 rounds of ammunition are to be used. It is of special importance that none of the guns should break down.

c. Should enemy vessels put out to sea, the bombardment of the coast will be stopped by Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla who will transmit the order on V.H.F. Boats will then prepare for action at sea.

d. The order for the attack by the E-Boat Flotilla will be issued by Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla by V.H.F. and radio signal.

III. Return passage:

a. Boats will assemble for return passage at point D (46° 01' N, 37° 51' E) and proceed from there on course 240° to point E and thence via point A to Kerch.

b. 1st E-Boat Flotilla will protect the formation against enemy planes and naval forces as far as point E and will then be dismissed to Kerch by Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla. It is left to Commander, 3rd Motor Minesweeper Flotilla to dismiss them earlier, if fighter escort arrives at dawn.

IV. 1st Air Corps has been requested to supply fighter escort from 1400 on 25 July until dusk and from dawn on 26 July as far as point A. The execution of this operation depends upon this allocation.

V. Communications arrangements will follow by teletype to all concerned.

(Signed) Kieseritzky.

CONFIDENTIAL

APPENDIX III

Reference: War Diary 31 July 1943

COPY

Stuttgart, 16 July 1943.
Richard-Wagner-Strasse, 39.

General Ruoff.

Dear Admiral,

On the occasion of my departure from 17th Army, I should like to express my sincere thanks for your valuable cooperation, so willingly given, and for your good comradeship. It was always a pleasure for me to work with you and your offices.

May I wish you and your formations every future success and good fortune. With most cordial greetings,

Heil Hitler!

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

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